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David Thom

THE

THREE GRAND EXHIBITIONS

OF

MAN'S ENMITY TO GOD.

BY

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BOLD STREET CHAPEL, LIVERPOOL.

LONDON :

SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, AND COMPANY.

LIVERPOOL: GEORGE PHILIP.

MDCCCXLV.



D. MARPLES, PRINTER, LIVERPOOL.

2662
— 1/5/1840

WILL MY COUSIN,

WILLIAM FALCONER, ESQ.

PERMIT ME

TO INSCRIBE TO HIM THE FOLLOWING PAGES,

NOT AS IF THEY CONTAINED HIS SENTIMENTS,

AND NOT AS IF,

BY ACCEDING TO MY REQUEST, HE PLEDGED HIMSELF,

IN ANY WAY WHATEVER,

TO THE APPROBATION AND ADOPTION OF MINE,

BUT

SOLELY AS A SLENDER EXPRESSION TOWARDS HIM,

ON MY PART,

OF

AFFECTION, GRATITUDE, AND RESPECT?

"Do you recollect," replied Mr. Dalben, "a conversation which we had in the winter, when Marten and Edgar were present, in which I said that I had been led to think that the object of the Divine government at this present time is not so much to prevent the commission of evil as to lead us, the children of Adam, by long and varied experience, to perceive that we can effect no good by any efforts of our own wisdom and free-will? I mean any effectual or permanent good to the world in general, or to souls in particular; although certain powers are lent to us, which may be used to present advantage in alleviation of suffering, and reciprocal kindness between fellow-creatures?"

"I remember this well," replied Henry, "and have thought much of it since."

"Our Saviour himself says," added Mr. Dalben, "that offences must come; by which we understand, that under existing circumstances,—under those circumstances into which man has brought himself by the exercise of his own free-will,—offences will come; and even that awful offence of nailing the Son of God to the cross, for which the Jewish nation suffer woe to this day, could not be dispensed with. But this is my belief, that when the full time shall have arrived when all that is necessary to the accomplishment of the divine purposes shall be finished, and when the rebel creature has tried all his experiments and found them productive only of misery, perplexity, fear and death,—then will the hand of Omnipotence be stretched forth to put an end to transgression in the act, as it was before terminated in the imputation, by the death of Christ."

"Sir," said Henry, "do I understand you aright? Do you anticipate a period in which evil will cease to be?"

"My anticipations, my Henry, are nothing," replied Mr. Dalben; "I have anticipated many things, and my anticipations, not having been based on truth, have in many instances passed away as the early cloud. In all things which admit not of the evidence of the senses we can have no guide but Scripture. And though I once was somewhat forward in giving you my opinion, yet in this, perhaps our last, but certainly one of our most serious conferences, I would willingly answer any question you wish to put to me in the very words of Scripture itself."

"My dear Sir," said Henry, "permit me to repeat my question. Do you anticipate a period in which evil will cease to exist?"

"The only light we can receive upon this subject," replied Mr. Dalben, "is from Scripture: in the Epistle of Paul to the Colossians we have these words: 'For by him (Christ) were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell: and (having made peace through the blood of his cross,) by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.'" Colossians i. 16—20.

"By whom, and by what process," said Henry, "do you then suppose that this mighty deliverance shall be wrought? The question may seem a foolish one, as I know there can be no deliverance to sinful man but in Christ; but I speak as requiring proofs from Scripture."

"St. Paul shall answer this question," said Mr. Dalben—"For, if through the offence of one, *the many* (*οἱ πολλοί*) be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, by one man Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto *the many*. And not as by one that sinned, the gift: for the judgment (was) by one to condemnation, but the free gift (is) of many offences unto justification. For as by one man's disobedience *the many* were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall *the many* be made righteous. Moreover, the law entered, that the offences might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, (*ζωὴν αἰώνιον*) by Jesus Christ, our Lord.'" Rom. v. 15, 16, 19—21.

"This passage," replied Henry, "strikes me with amazing force; and according to all rules of logic, if we allow it to be inspired, which as Christians we must do, it proves more than ever I before apprehended of the perfection of the work of salvation."—MRS. SHERWOOD'S HENRY MILNER, Part IV., pp. 365—368.

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PREFACE.

PERSONS who have done me the honour to read through my "Divine Inversion" will perceive at a glance, that the following work is constructed on the principle of one of the three *relatively* true systems of religion there alluded to, namely, the system of progression, or of the progressive development and manifestation of divine truth.

Having human nature for my immediate theme, my great object is to open up one of the grand and essential characteristics of that nature. In scripture, the enmity to God of the carnal or human mind is laid down as an axiom. But to what extent? Partial or total? And how is it made known. These and similar questions the following pages attempt to answer. The enmity of man to God is complete. It extends equally to man's intellect, to man's will, and to man's affections. And it makes its appearance in every case in which an opportunity is afforded to it to do so. God himself has afforded such opportunities for its display. The scriptures constitute the records of these and of their consequences. And to the three grand forms in which opportunities for the display of man's enmity have been divinely vouchsafed, and in which the enmity

itself has thereby made its appearance, I am in the present treatise inviting attention.

Opposition on the part of man to God is not brought out all at once in its fulness, depth, and intense malignity. At first man merely contemplated, in spite of God, raising himself from his own to God's level. Gen. iii. 6. Afterwards having, in the persons of the Jews, been elevated by God to the possession of many high and glorious privileges, indeed, having been so far placed by God on a footing of equality with himself as to have had the name and rank of *god* assigned to him, (Psalm lxxxii. 6; John x. 34, 35,) man gave God battle on the very ground which, by divine grace, he had been enabled temporarily to occupy, with a view to its continued possession, although by his own wicked procedure it had by him been forfeited. Psalm lxxxii. 7; 1 Thess. ii. 14—16; Rev. xii. 7—9. It was not until after his enmity had exhibited itself in these two inferior shapes that man proceeded to act as if he had been independent of God altogether: taking God's place, usurping God's attributes and prerogatives, and venturing to trample God himself, in the form of the revelation of himself which that glorious Being hath seen meet to impart, under his feet. 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4; Rev. xiii. 4—6. Such is the progress, such the consummation of human enmity.

Not that God intends, or that it is the intention of the author of the present volume who is trying to point the notice of his fellow men to God himself as the best interpreter of his own purposes, to represent human nature as in any one individual

more adverse to the divine nature than it is in another ; or to represent human nature as having been, in the course of ages, progressively deteriorated. Quite the contrary. Human nature is in all the same. Rom. iii. 10—19, 22, 23. What it was in Adam it is in every one of his descendants. What it was six thousand years ago it has all along been, is now, and will continue to be till the end of time. "Sans changer" is its true and appropriate motto. It is in all enmity to God. Nothing more : nothing less. What has been progressive in human nature is the manifestation of what it is. Feebly in the infancy of its being was its enmity capable of being made known. Under the guardianship of the law, or when advanced to that state of pupilage which youth implies, its enmity had fuller scope to display itself. To the maturity of human nature, however, as now existing, was reserved that complete exhibition of the enmity of human nature to God, which constitutes the *ne plus ultra* of demonstrative evidence on this subject.

A nature like that of man, which is the same in all, is clearly not the subject of change, either for the better, or for the worse : all that happens, or can happen to it, is, that as ages roll on, and opportunities occur, it shall be made more and more to disclose the depths of its earthliness, selfishness, and opposition to God ; that is, progressively to shew what at all times and in every one, what from its origin till its termination, it ever is, ever has been, ever will be.

This, however, is not all.

Superficial readers and thinkers, looking at my immediate

object, may be apt to fancy, that to shew the manner in which human nature is made progressively to display its enmity to God, is all that I aim at in this present work. Against such a notion, as actually and absolutely opposed to the grand purpose with which I have embarked in this literary undertaking, I beg leave respectfully to put the parties alluded to, if any of them shall deign to these pages their perusal, as well as others of a different class who may be liable to commit the same mistake, on their guard.

This work, which is one of a series of treatises, is subservient to what has been for years the leading and favourite object of my life, to bring under the notice of the church, upon true and scriptural principles, the freedom, the certainty, and the universality of the love borne by God to man.

Man is opposed to God; God is opposed to man. Gal. v. 17. A reciprocal enmity thus subsists between the Creator and the creature. And this reciprocal enmity is complete,—is of the nature of a life and death struggle between both. But how thoroughly contrasted is enmity to God on the part of man, with enmity to man on the part of God! Man's enmity to God is the opposition of hatred to love; Rom. viii. 7; God's enmity to man is the opposition of love to hatred. Matt. v. 43—48; Rom. xii. 20, 21.

To shew that man's enmity to God is the platform on which is displayed God's love to man is really at bottom the object of this essay.

Three things in connexion with this object are aimed at in the following pages.

First. As I shew that human nature, the same always and in all, is nevertheless susceptible of growing development and manifestation, so is it my desire to shew that the divine nature, the same always and unchangeably in itself, is nevertheless susceptible of growing development and manifestation likewise.

Secondly. I want to shew that, as there are three grand progressive developments or manifestations of the enmity of human nature, so also are there three grand progerssive developments or manifestations of the love of the divine nature. And, farther, that each of the manifestations of the one nature corresponds to each of the manifestations of the other nature. The lowest manifestation of hatred to the lowest manifestation of love; the second to the second; and the third and highest to the third and highest.

And, thirdly, I aim at shewing that, as the divine nature in general stands opposed to human nature in general, so does each of the manifestations of the divine nature stand opposed, and increasingly opposed too, to each of the manifestations of human nature. There is mutual opposition exhibited between the lowest manifestation of human hatred and the lowest manifestation of divine love; increased mutual opposition exhibited between the second and higher manifestations of both; and the mutual opposition or antagonism which subsists between the two appears reaching its height, when both are manifested as existing, and as operating counter to each other, in the third and highest degree.

This mutual antagonism or opposition, however, is not, be it observed, a conflict between equal parties. Hate opposing

love, the creature opposing the Creator, is the essentially impotent presuming to withstand the Almighty. It is the potsherds of the earth striving with their Maker. In a conflict so unequal, what but one result can follow?

Through the medium of progressive displays of both, to suggest the ultimate and complete victory of love over hatred, of the Creator over the creature, is the real scope of this present work.

In each of the progressive manifestations of God's nature as love, in opposition to the corresponding progressive manifestations of man's nature as hate, there is a nearer approach made towards the final and everlasting triumph of the former over the latter. This, by means of the last specimen of the enmity of hate to love, giving occasion to the last counter specimen of the enmity of love to hate, is completely realised. Man's enmity to God puts forth at last its greatest effort. God's love to man seizes on the opportunity to put forth its greatest effort in opposition to this. God, of course, overcomes. Evil appears finally and for ever triumphed over by God. The enmity of the creature is seen finally and for ever swallowed up in the love of the Creator.

Thus does enmity to God, on the part of man, tend in its last and highest development to self-destruction; thus does love to man, on the part of God, (the *Φιλανθρωπία* of the apostle, Titus iii. 4,) tend in its last and highest development to self-diffusion and self-perpetuation, in the form of the new, perfect, and everlasting creation of all in God.

Such being the grand issue aimed at by God, such also

will be found to be the grand issue to which the following production, viewed as a whole, is directing attention. And yet even this is not all.

Plain must it be to every reader, that the two portions of this work in which the first and second exhibitions of man's enmity are treated of, are merely subservient to that of which the third exhibition of human enmity constitutes the subject-matter. But equally plain it may not be, without the assistance afforded by a hint or two, that the denial of divinely revealed fact, which is the grand character of man's enmity during the present aera of the world, embraces a much wider range of topics than at first sight it may appear to be my object, in what follows, to bring under notice.

The grand divinely revealed fact which now is giving occasion to the display of man's enmity is, that *God hath given to us eternal life, and that this life is in his Son.* 1 John v. 11.

In other words, men are found opposing God's declaration, that eternal, or divine life, is theirs, not contingently or conditionally, but as matter of certainty and fact.

Accordingly, upon this particular exhibition of enmity I dwell.

To the members of the church, the declaration as to their personal interest in life everlasting is, in every age, carried home as what it is,—a divine fact and truth. Worldly men, on the contrary, whether profane or pious, reject the declaration in question as a divine truth, and as making known a divine fact: the profane, by broadly denying it; the pious, by attempting to derive some conviction of their possessing an

interest in life everlasting from personal experience, from the opinions of others, or from human reasonings. By both classes equally is God's declaration, that *he hath bestowed upon them* eternal life, rejected as a divine fact; that is, as absolutely true, solely on God's authority, or because God himself hath declared it to be so.

To the mind of the child of God, the fact of his possessing eternal life in Christ Jesus shines in through the medium of God's own declaration, and by means of the spiritual and heavenly light wherewith all divine truths, when the eyes of the understanding are opened to perceive them, are seen to be invested. But the mind of the unregenerate man, over which the thick darkness of fleshly views and prejudices broods, cannot comprehend such a truth; John i. 5; indeed, so far from doing so, as labouring under enmity against God he must oppose it; preferring to the light of God, and the knowledge of his oneness with God which that light discloses, to grope under the influence of earthly principles amidst the darkness of human nature, and to try to infer from reasonings which are opposed to God, what can never be established except upon God's authority.

Now, certainly the fact that God hath given to us eternal life is not the only fact revealed to us from above, and the only fact so revealed towards which the enmity of the fleshly mind is directed. For man's mind equally opposes every other divinely revealed fact. Nevertheless, the fact in question—the fact that we have eternal life in Christ Jesus—is the grand divinely revealed one. Independently of God speaking to us

through it—independently of our knowing by means of the divine light which it affords, that God in Christ is our everlasting Father, and that we in Christ stand to him everlastingly and indestructibly in the relation of sons—there is no medium through which, no ground on which, we can be satisfied of any other fact as being divinely true. While on the other hand, in consequence of our having had the fact of eternal life being freely bestowed upon us in Christ made known to us, and in consequence of the true light having begun thereby to shine into our minds, preparation is made for one divine fact after another, in God's good time and according to God's good pleasure, shining along with this into our minds likewise. Ignorant of and opposed to the revealed fact of God's love to themselves personally, human beings naturally are in no condition to see and apprehend any other fact as divine. They may try to reason themselves into a conviction of the truth of what is contained in the scriptures on the ground of evidences external and internal. They may try to reason themselves into a conviction that they are children of God and heirs of life everlasting by observations on their own personal experience, or by conclusions drawn from the statements of others. Who, however, can fail to perceive that such convictions, even if they could be attained to, (which as matter of absolute and divine certainty is impossible,) would not be to the mind the revelation of divine facts? That, however strong and cogent, they would at the utmost be mere human inferences, or the mere results of human reasonings? And who can fail to perceive also, that between conclusions from human reason-

ings and convictions produced by divinely revealed facts, there exists and must always exist, a wide, and, in as far as the human mind itself is concerned, an impassable gulph? Let that follower of Christ Jesus who has any doubts on this subject peruse with care and attention the recently published memoirs of poor Blanco White.*

Opposition on the part of human beings in general to God's declarations of his having actually, certainly, and unconditionally bestowed upon them eternal life in his own Son, is then insisted on by me as the grand present exhibition of their enmity to God. The reason for my doing so being, that eternal life so bestowed is the grand divinely revealed fact. The fact of facts. The fact in the light of which alone, seen and recognised as what it is, other divine facts can be seen and recognised as what they are. Enmity to this grand fact, on the part of man's fleshly mind, I strive to evince, involves, of necessity, enmity on its part to all others. Enmity to them as divinely revealed facts, I mean; not necessarily enmity to them, or rather to something like them, when regarded as points ascertained by mere rational investigation, or when presented in the shape of mere rational conclusions.

Always does revelation as authoritative, because divine, Matthew vii. 29, assume an attitude of hostility to reason as speculative, because human. Hence to reason or fleshly

* The procedure of the German Rationalists, and of their imitator, the Rev. Theodore Parker, of Roxbury, Massachusetts, is also, in reference to this subject, most instructive.

mind the dogmatic and imperative style of revelation must be peculiarly offensive—must be the object of constant, inveterate, and growing dislike. (In writing these words, I am thinking of Blanco White again.) It is only when men contrive to dress up what appear to be divine facts in reason's garb,—when they try to establish the truth of the declarations of God's word on the basis of Lardners' "Credibilities" and Paleys' "Natural Theologies"—that, flattering the carnal mind, they render the frittered away semblances of heavenly things in any way whatever palatable and acceptable to it.

The great extent to which man's enmity to God goes out, and the varied character which it assumes in this present third and last aera of the world, will be found glanced at in the fourth chapter of the third part of the ensuing work.

Will my readers permit an apology for repetitions similar to that which occurs in the Preface to my "Assurance of Faith?" I wish above all things to be understood. To the realization of this wish I am willing to sacrifice any fame which I may be supposed to consider desirable on the score of authorship. The truth of God is to me solely and supremely valuable. Nothing can be permitted to stand in competition with it. Brief remarks, unillustrated statements, rapid sketches of divine views, whenever sentiments *opposed* to the popular theology are concerned, are, I am satisfied, calculated to produce but a feeble if any impression. Nay, however clear, however distinct, however conclusive I may be, I may consider myself exceedingly well off, if in many cases a meaning the very reverse of that which I want to convey be not ascribed

to my words. *How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly,** was language addressed during the days of his flesh to him, all whose discourses, whose whole life indeed, constituted a most decided and unambiguous answer to the query. "What do you mean? Speak out so as to be understood," has been language more than once addressed to me by literary men after perusing, or professing to have perused, what I have previously in the simplicity of my heart fancied to be statements characterised by a perspicuity and straightforwardness which left no room for misapprehension. Necessarily therefore do I in this present work from time to time dwell on my views—present them under varied aspects—and insist on their being looked at and examined. Not satisfied with details—not satisfied with repetitions—not satisfied with deductions from facts—I have occasionally had recourse to abridgements and summaries. I may thus be offensively tiresome. It is certainly not my desire to be so. But ten thousand times rather would I be tedious—prolix in the extreme—garrulous even—if I could but catch attention and be successful in conveying my meaning, than gain applause for brevity, point, and elegance of composition at the expense of my readers, Camilla-like, skimming over the surface of my pages unimpeded and unimpressed—unannoyed even from time to time by the resistance which it is my purpose to give to many long and deeply cherished, but mistaken religious theories.

This present preface I find it impossible to close, with-

* John x. 24.

out speaking of some Universalist friends in America, and without indulging my feelings by a brief and hasty reference to some much loved evangelical coadjutors in the glorious work of making known God's universal love, who reside in this country.

Grieved have I been, grieved am I, at the necessity of dissenting from, indeed of directly opposing, many of the views of such men as Walter Balfour, Thomas J. Sawyer, Thomas Whittemore, William S. Balch, John D. Williamson, Philo Price, R. O. Williams, and Abraham Norwood. Much do I respect, much do I love these men. The exertions made by them among our transatlantic cousins, to remove the hideous mask with which popular religion attempts to hide the face of Deity, and to diffuse the knowledge of God as love, have been and are incessant and unwearied. Their talented productions I have read with interest and advantage. And for courtesies received by me at their hands I acknowledge myself largely their debtor. Many circumstances conspire to induce me to act in an unqualified sense as their assistant and ally. But alas! our respective paths do not lie together. Between my American friends and myself an insurmountable barrier exists. Denying, as they do, the supreme Deity of that Saviour in whom I glory, and in whom is all my trust; sweeping away, along with certain erroneous notions concerning the atonement, the necessity and efficacy of the blood shed on Calvary altogether; entertaining what I cannot help deeming to be most unscriptural views of the nature of regeneration; and making light of the election of the church of God, and of the sweet and

indispensable uses to which that election is subservient in the scheme of man's redemption; how, with all my respect and love for them, and my anxiety, as far as I can consistently with truth, to second their labours, is it possible for us to sail in the same boat? *I grieve for thee, my brother Jonathan!* O that the Lord would but be pleased to alter your sentiments respecting the leading topics in controversy between us! While rejecting error, as it rejoices my heart to think in many respects you do, would that it were not on human and rational grounds merely, but in consequence of the direct establishment in your minds of divine truth. Gloriously scriptural as to fundamentals were the views of the Murrays, the Winchesters, the Mitchells, and others, whom you hail as the harbingers of Universalism in your highly favoured and magnificent republic. May I not be permitted to anticipate your reverting to these? Not reverting to them as a whole, but as purified from mistakes? Then might something like harmony prevail between you and me; and then, instead of aiming professedly at the same end by the employment on the one hand of Calvinistic, and on the other of Socinian weapons, we might be found fighting together side by side, wielding the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, in the armies of Prince Emmanuel.

From dear transatlantic friends, I turn to the much loved friends of Universalism at home.

The labours of the venerable and venerated Richard Roe, Esq., once a clergyman of the English and Irish Establishment, and the well known author of the "Arrangement of the

Book of Revelation on the principles of parallelism," as well as of many other valuable productions, continue to benefit the church of God; and these persevered in at a very advanced period of life. Long may he be spared to us!

Mrs. Sherwood of Worcester, whose desert and fame as an authoress no eulogium of mine can add to, still prosecutes her efforts to instruct and improve mankind, especially the rising generation, without affording any evidence of the hand of time having impaired her vigorous although truly feminine intellect, or of her having exhausted the sweet and impressive creations of her fancy. Have my readers seen her "Monk of Cimiés," and the fourth part of her "Henry Milner"? If not, a treat awaits them. Love to God through his divine and glorified Son Christ Jesus, flowing out in the form of love to man, characterises all this lady's productions. Much and ardently do I, in common with many others, look forward to the publication of a work on the "types of Scripture," which she is now engaged in preparing for the press.

James Riddall Wood, the talented author of "Angel Visits," published before the gospel in all its fulness had opened upon his mind, will not, I hope, allow the distracting cares of business to prevent his favouring the election of grace with other productions of his matured and divinely taught mind.

What shall I say of other dear friends, such as Miss Hobbs, of Waterford, authoress of "Maran-atha"—Mr. Adolphus Kent, of Bath, author of an "Address to the Children of Israel"—and Mr. William Seabrook, of Plymouth, author of a beautiful tract on the millennium, and some other treatises?

They love the Lord Jesus—they recognize him as Lord of his church, and Lord of all—and they are engaged in their respective spheres in endeavouring to promote his glorious cause. So also is that truly able and excellent man, Francis Irvine, Esq. of Edinburgh. Differ we do on some points. But Jesus is our God and our Saviour. And in his salvation revealed to us as freely and sovereignly ours—as freely and sovereignly the ultimate possession of all—we rejoice and will rejoice for ever.

Blessed be God too, that since the period of my last publication he hath privileged one to come forward in the character of the poet of free, universal, everlasting love. I allude to Philip James Bailey, Esq. It is in the second edition of his “Festus” that this gentleman is found pleading with all the force of genius, and all the charms of elegant and eloquent verse, the cause of God and truth. How extraordinary this poem! A fiction it is not; it is the setting forth of realities the profoundest and the most sublime, clothed with the garb of fiction. Original, impassioned, imaginative; combining the sweetest pathos with the most awe-inspiring grandeur of sentiments and language; rich and varied in its delineations of human character; surprising by the rapidity of its transitions from earth to heaven, and heaven to earth, “from grave to gay, from gay to calm serene,” and yet not less felicitous than rapid in its transitions; at one moment plunging into the depths of metaphysics, at another interesting by the homeliness, although strict and beautiful propriety of its metaphors; not seldom constraining laughter by its rich and easy, its irresistibly comic humour; quaint occasionally, powerful

always ; frequently rough, frequently flowing with all the ease, and grace, and majesty of Milton ; presenting the muse arrayed in her most gorgeous robes, and yet having recourse to their aid in subserviency to the display and recommendation of truth ; Mr. Bailey's work strikes me as one of the most successful modern achievements in the field of poetry. It will live. Circumstances may for a time succeed in withdrawing from it the public attention ; but ultimately it will command, and having once commanded will retain, the eminent place and rank which are its due.

Great and important is the change which has taken place in the author's mind since he presented to the world his poem in its original form. Even previously to that period verging towards higher and clearer views of truth, since, they have been disclosed to him. The public, the church of God rather, now enjoys the benefit of his mental advance. Fearlessly and honestly does he, in this splendid production of his muse, avow what it has been given him to see. The love of God in Christ, having its origin in the divine purpose, and extending through the church to all, is now his glorious theme. With this he sets out—with this he ends. The special salvation of the church is one of his topics :—

Those whom thou choosest are to be redeemed,
Out of the mighty multitude of men.

This, however, is merely subservient to a salvation which is universal :—

Yet all, as of one nature, be redeemed.

Never is Mr. Bailey found contending for the absurdity—the worse than absurdity, the blasphemy—which is involved in

supposing that the creature has frustrated, or can frustrate, the purposes of the Creator. So far from that,

However contrary man set his heart
To God, he is but working out his will;
And, at an infinite angle, more or less
Obeying his own soul's necessity.
He only hath free will whose will is fate.

Thus, to our poet, God is the all in all. God is the Sovereign whose behests all of necessity obey. But his sovereignty is not that of a tyrant. He *is* love. And, therefore, all that proceeds from him—all that he does—corresponds to this his divine essence. Hence the grand scope of “Festus,” to illustrate what God as scripturally revealed *is*,—not to strengthen and perpetuate any mere human vagary, any of the thousand and one religious theories, as to what God *may be*. May the Lord bless my dear friend's attempt, and the attempt of every one who, from spiritual and heavenly motives, and not from a desire to pander to popular prejudices and popular falsehoods, aims at shewing forth the divine glory; who aims at exalting the Creator, although of necessity the result must be a corresponding depression of the creature. 1 Cor. i. 17—31. Decidedly can I, and can all who know the truth, rejoice in the revealed fact of God's

High power and goodness in redeeming
And blessing souls that love him, spite of sin,
And their old earthly stain;

rejoice in the revealed fact, that

By creating to and from
Eternity, and multiplying ever
His own one being through the universe,
He doth eternize happiness, and make
God infinite, by making all in Christ;

rejoice to know that

By law, by gospel, and by grace,
The scheme of God's salvation is complete;

and rejoice to feel, as the result of the manifestation of this to us, that we

Him love then all the more, and worship him,
Who lived, and died, and rose from death for us,
And is and reigns for ever God in all.

NOTE.

WHEN may we expect the appearance of my dear friend John Robinson's long promised "Adam and Christ?" Mr. R. G. Hunt, in his "Impregnable Security of Believers in Christ," and his "One Faith of the Gospel," and Mr. James Nicol, in his "Review of Bannatyne's Sermon," have not, I trust, brought to a conclusion their exertions in the cause of truth—their endeavours to attract notice not to a stinted, limited, and human, because conditional gospel, but to a salvation which is finished, free, full, and everlasting. Mr. Charles T. P. Metcalf and Mr. Thomas Storey have, by their vindication upon scriptural principles of the unlimited love of God, in their published writings, led us to hope for more at their hands. Would that my respected friend Cowan, who has so admirably assailed the unscriptural dogma of eternal torments, had but his mind opened up to the glory of full and universal salvation, and thereby was enabled to benefit the church of God by publishing on this delightful theme! Surely William H. Teulon, of Halifax, Nova Scotia, who has already appeared as an author, will not slacken his exertions in the good cause; and John Charles Mence, of London, William Magee and John Calder, of Glasgow, William Webber, of Brixham, and James Sugg, of Exeter, having shewn what they can effect as writers in periodicals, may, I hope, be induced to apply themselves to the preparing of less fugitive productions. The Rev. Messrs. Napper and Sirr cannot, I am sure, be ashamed to avow and draw attention to their sentiments. Can I, in alluding to living writers on the subject of God's sovereign and universal love, omit to mention the name of one of its most able and efficient supporters, my friend John Hamilton, Esq., of St. Ernan's, County Donegal? Will Mr. John Read assist us?

ERRATA AND ADDENDA.

Page.

17. Line 9th from top, *dele* the word "the."
18. Put the words "of course," 3rd line from the top, between "itself" and ("an effort.")
32. Line 15th, "Edn." for "Edu."
194. Line 9th from top, for "and," between "Roman Catholics" and "with," substitute "or."
246. Line 14th from bottom, for "affords," read "afford."
268. Lines 7th and 8th from bottom, for "reconciled," read "reconciliation."
292. Line 8th from top, instead of "law," read "the law," that is, "the law of man."
308. Line 8th from top, for the period after "divine," put a colon.
315. Line 2nd from bottom, for "nessarily," read "necessarily."
379. Line 6th from top, divide the words "a future."
384. Line 12th from top, *dele* "severe."
- " Line 13th from top, for "its," read "it."
388. The mark † in the text should be placed after the word "commenced," in line 6th of the text from the bottom.
395. Line 12th from top, separate the words "divine" and "knowledge."
460. After the words "righteousness of faith," line 11th from top, put "Rom. iii 22."
470. Upon the word "manifesting," which occurs in line 9th from the bottom of the text, there should have been the following note:—"By passively and indirectly being the occasion of, and thereby bringing to light, not by actively and directly stimulating to the commission of. Rom. vii. 8; Ephes. v. 13."
489. Another note might have been introduced here, suggesting another and an additional view of the subject:—"In Jesus' death law ended; in Jesus' descent into hades, and continuing under the power of the second death three days, sin ended; and in Jesus' resurrection death ended. Just so, assuming law to continue as long as human nature itself continues (for human nature is law to all who are subject to it, Rom. viii. 2, and law may be regarded as destroyed in a threefold order, viz.,—in Jesus personally when he died, in the church at the period of Jerusalem's destruction, and in the world at the end of time,) then law ends in the ending of human nature, sin ends in the unregenerate descending into hades and continuing under the power of the second death during the whole of the mediatorial kingdom, and death ends in the second resurrection, or in the making of the whole body of human beings alive, for ever and divinely, in him who is the heavenly and glorified Adam. The analogy between the cases of Christ, and of man in general, is thus most striking. See Hosea vi. 2."
526. At the beginning of line 21st from the top and 16th from the bottom, insert "in" before "old and young."
540. Instead of "a," substitute "the" before "testimony."

INTRODUCTION.

INTRODUCTION.

SECTION FIRST.

THREEFOLD FORM OF HUMAN ENMITY.

ENMITY to God is not merely a quality of human nature, but constitutes the very basis, principle or essence of human nature.

This is a truth of which the great majority of mankind is profoundly ignorant; and a truth which, when brought under their notice, is by many systematically rejected. Socinians absolutely loathe it. Numerous individuals and bodies of individuals who disclaim being actuated by Socinian principles conceive that, however decidedly opposed to God on the whole man may be, there are nevertheless to be discovered in his nature some remains of good qualities and dispositions—a certain latent love to God—by which his enmity to that glorious Being is counteracted, if not even neutralized. Others again, who cannot subscribe to this idea, fancy that the enmity of man to God—the natural existence of which they do not dispute—is capable, without any injury to his nature, of being removed; and that he, as a mere human being, may be induced to love God by means of the civilizing and refining influence of the precepts, motives,

and examples of Scripture. While even the strictest classes of professors,—those who lay it down as a fixed and undeniable maxim that there exists, on the part of man, such a native and thorough opposition to God as nothing but a new creation in Christ Jesus can overcome,—betray their ignorance, by self-inconsistently contending for *the natural ability of man to love, serve, and obey God*: that is, by contending for the possession of this ability on the part of a creature *acknowledged by themselves to be essentially opposed to God*; and by representing this as imposing an obligation on every descendant of Adam to believe the gospel!—In other words, while Socinians openly and honestly avow their conviction that the doctrine of man's essential enmity to God is untrue, and proceed on the strength of this their denial to invest human nature with qualities the most lovely and attractive, thousands who disavow the Socinian theory, but are in reality Socinians at heart, evince an equal although a less honest and straightforward hatred of this truth: and this, either by representing the enmity of man to God as co-existing in him with qualities, the tendency of which is to recommend him to the Divine favour; or by supposing the enmity capable of being withdrawn from human nature, without there existing any necessity for the destruction, by means of the new creation of that nature; or by most absurdly and inconsistently making a creature who is, by their own admission, essentially opposed to God, to be nevertheless qualified to love, serve, and obey God.

In clear, marked, and diametrical opposition to all such open denials, and indirect although equally infidel sappings of divine truth, does Scripture itself proclaim the doctrine of the enmity of man to God: not only laying down the enmity as a matter of fact, but likewise shewing it to be so deeply seated in, so essential to the nature of man, that only by the destruction of the nature itself can the enmity, as necessarily

involved in it, and as necessarily therefore sharing its fate, come to an end and pass away.

Broad and unequivocal are those declarations of the inspired volume which establish the doctrine. *Know ye not*, says the Apostle James, *that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.* James iv. 4. And, if possible, still more explicitly observes the great Apostle to the Gentiles, *the mind of flesh, or the human mind, is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither, indeed, can be.* Rom, viii. 7.*

That this enmity is not an accidental circumstance, but essential to and inseparably connected with human nature, is proved by the fate to which human nature is subjected. When I find man, as sinful, condemned to die; when I find the Son of God, as having taken hold of the sinful nature of man, (rendered sinless in himself,) requiring to die before he could put sin away; and when I find the descendants of Adam represented as living for evermore hereafter, not by bearing the image of the earthy, or by being reinvested with human nature, but by bearing the image of the heavenly, or by being invested with the divine nature; what conclusion but one can I draw from the facts with which I am thus divinely made acquainted? Human nature, I infer, is so decidedly adverse to God, or so thoroughly is the principle of enmity rooted in it, that only by the destruction of the nature itself can its enmity be got rid of and destroyed.—Observe, it is through sin or the manifestation of enmity, that death enters; and it is only by means of the destruction of human nature, that sin and death are both themselves destroyed.—

* Various other passages of Scripture suggest, if not positively state, the same doctrine. See, for example, Matt. x. 34—36; Ibid. xvi. 23; Luke xiv. 26; John xv. 18—20; Rom. vii. 18, &c. &c. Besides, the whole of the discoveries of revelation rest upon this doctrine as their basis.

And is not my conclusion the subject-matter of express divine statements ? The Apostle Paul intimates both in his epistle to the Ephesians, chapter ii. verses 13—17, and in that to the Colossians, chapter i. verses 20—22, that in the cross of Christ, or in the destruction or sacrifice by our Lord of his own pure, perfect, and holy human nature, was the enmity of the creature to the Creator brought to an end and slain : a fact which, taken in connexion with the other facts of man having died in Christ's death, and risen again in his resurrection to newness of life, shews the only means of the destruction of man's enmity to God to have been the destruction of man's nature. The same Apostle likewise asserts that flesh and blood, or human nature, cannot inherit the kingdom of God ; 1st Cor. xv. 50 ; that it is by means of the incorruptible being put upon the corruptible, and the immortal upon the mortal, or by means of the supersession of human nature by the divine nature, that death is swallowed up in victory ; Ibid. 54 ; and, prosecuting the same subject elsewhere, that the heavenly blessedness is enjoyed, not by the perpetuation or resuscitation of the nature of man, but by *mortality being swallowed up of life*. 2d Cor. v. 4. Surely language cannot assert more clearly, more emphatically, more unequivocally than is done by this, that the properties of the Adamic nature, and among the rest of course its enmity to God, are so inherent in it, and so inseparable from it, that only in consequence of the destruction of that nature, effected through its being new created by being absorbed in the divine nature of Jesus glorified, can its properties come to an end and be destroyed.*

Divine declarations of an abstract kind are always best illustrated by divinely-revealed facts. The former we may from the ambiguity of words, or from other causes, mistake ;

* See further the language of Christ in John iii. 3—6 ; and xiv. 19, at the end.

the latter speak a language which sets all dispute and cavilling at defiance. Among the facts illustrative of man's enmity to God with which Scripture abounds, none have struck me as more convincing, and more worthy of being enforced on the attention of members of the Church, than the series of experiments, if I may be permitted so to speak, which God himself has made, and continues to make upon human nature; and which he has commissioned prophets and apostles to place upon record. Not experiments, be it observed, having it for their object to make any addition to the divine knowledge—a thing in itself impossible—but gone into and prosecuted solely with a view to communicate knowledge to us. And not experiments having it for their object to render man a being different from what he is, or to degrade him in the scale of creation—a piece of procedure which would, indeed, be unworthy of God, and devilish in the extreme—but performed with a view to man's shewing himself to be what he is, and in subserviency to the bringing out in all the fulness of its lustre of the glory of God, as evinced in the salvation of man. A series of experiments, in a word, which, having been intended and calculated to make man exhibit himself to be what he really is, have resulted in his shewing himself to be possessed of a nature which is enmity against God:—a nature the enmity of which is so deep-seated, intense, and essential that whatever the circumstances in which man may be placed, however great the advantages by which he may be surrounded, and however strong the inducements held out to him to act a contrary part, he will always and as a matter of necessity be found displaying it.

Different, certainly, is this view of things from the notions commonly entertained respecting the subject. Looking upon God as never having addressed a law to man which man of himself was unable to obey, indeed holding, or professing to hold, in abhorrence the very idea of God having ordained

man to abstain from evil or perform good, when to do so exceeded the compass of his natural ability, almost all classes of religionists necessarily consider divine prohibitions and commands as designed to afford the creature so many opportunities for manifesting the rectitude of his mind, the strength of his moral principles, and the excellent dispositions and feelings wherewith he is endowed. Man, thus considered, presents himself to them in the light of a sort of independent being ; subjected it is true as a creature to the Creator, but nevertheless sharing with the Creator in the possession of certain divine attributes, such as freedom of will, immortality, and so on : a sovereign tributary, and yet a sovereign still ; bound to obey, and able if it so please him to obey every divine command, but capable at the same time, in the plenitude of the freedom of his will, of rising in rebellion against his liege Lord and Benefactor. Does God enjoin man to love him and keep his commandments ? It is, in their apprehension, because man is able to comply with such an injunction that it is imposed on him. Such is the almost universally adopted theory, such the principle upon which every fleshly system of religion with which I am acquainted, every fleshly system which it is possible to invent, necessarily rests. Prohibitions of evil and commands to believe were issued by God to man, and are now, under a pretended divine commission borne by them, enforced by mere human priest-hoods upon their fellow-men, on the ground, as they suppose, of its being in the power of the human race to obey divine law. Need I observe that, with the standing or falling of this alleged ability on the part of man, all systems of religion which assume and rest on the possession of this ability by man as their basis must themselves stand or fall likewise ?

Now the theory of the creature's ability to obey divine law, although a favourite with man, derives no countenance whatever from the word of God. On the contrary, the whole

concentrated fire of heaven's artillery is brought to bear against it, and thereby it, with every superstructure which has been reared upon it, is levelled with the ground. Instead of proceeding on the principle of man being endowed with a power of obeying divine law, the Scriptures lay it down as their fundamental axiom that man's mind, properly and emphatically designated the mind of flesh, is not only not subject to the law of God, but is totally unable to be so. And instead of God having instituted the series of experiments to which I have just referred in order to enable man to exhibit his strength and goodness, he did so with exactly the opposite view of man having thereby so many opportunities of displaying his weakness and wickedness. God is represented as acting with regard to man in general, and to his vineyard the house of Israel in particular, not in the expectation of their producing good grapes, but in order to their shewing that they could produce nothing but bad* ones. In the language of man, God *looks* upon them to see what they *would bring forth*, or he makes experiments upon them. Isaiah v. 4. And yet he is not disappointed, nor are his purposes frustrated, when he finds that their produce is worthless and their appropriate fate to be consumed.† No doubt, he gave man in the person of Adam, and he afforded the fleshly church of the Jews opportunities to have manifested their strength and goodness *had they been possessed of any*. But as the nature of man is in reality weak and wicked, such opportunities could only result in mankind shewing themselves to be what they actually are.

Well do I know that to bring out a manifestation of man's inability to obey divine law was not God's *ultimate* object. For the same inspired volume which makes me acquainted with the experiments by which man's inherent weakness and wickedness have been demonstrated, makes me acquainted likewise with the fact of all this having been subservient

* Wild.

† See Hebrews vi. 8.

to a series of experiments evincing and establishing the power and goodness of God. If it be an axiom of Holy Writ that man, as possessed of a mind of flesh, *cannot be subjected to divine law*, Rom. viii. 7, it is equally an axiom of the same infallible authority that the things which are *impossible with men are possible with God*. Matt. xix. 26. The character of Jesus Christ, as contrasted with that of Adam, affords the practical proof of this. Adam the creature could not resist temptation; Gen. iii. 6; but Jesus the Creator could. Matt. iv. 1—11. Disobedience to divine law is characteristic of man; Rom. iii. 10—19; v. 20, viii. 7; to obey divine law to the very uttermost, and thereby to become the end of the law for righteousness, is characteristic of him who was God manifest in flesh. John xix. 30. Rom. viii. 3. x. 4. Philip. ii. 6—9. Thus ordinary religionists are *in a certain sense* right. God unquestionably gave law to man that it might be obeyed by man, and by man it has been obeyed; but not by the first man who is of the earth, earthy, or by any of his earthy descendants. It was accomplished by the second man, the Lord from heaven. 1 Cor. xv. 47. Jesus in flesh obeyed it; Jesus, in the sacrifice of the nature which had obeyed it—an act which of itself was the last and crowning act of obedience, John x. 18*—so satisfied it, so completely exhausted it or swallowed it up that, its very existence coming thereby to an end, no opportunity of yielding obedience to it was thenceforward possible. Rom. x. 4. And all this because, although in appearance addressed to the first man, and afterwards to a portion of the first man's descendants, divine law was properly speaking and really addressed only to the second man. To Jesus *the Man*, emphatically so called, 1 Tim. ii. 5, and to him only, and this with a view to their being obeyed, were addressed the whole contents of the

* *This commandment have I received of my Father.*

Old Testament Scriptures as law, summed up in the command, as stated by himself, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.* Matt. xxii. 37, 39. In the hands of Jesus, the true Mediator, was this *law ordained.* Gal. iii. 19. And by him, through the completeness of the obedience which he rendered to it taken in connexion with his heavenly rank and character, was this *law magnified and made honourable.* Isaiah xlii. 21. Divine law was then, in the sense just mentioned, given to man, and this in order to its being obeyed by man. Gal. iv. 4. Rom. viii. 3. x. 4.

A fact like this, however, instead of being inconsistent with, establishes my position that divine law, in so far as it can be conceived of as addressed to mere man, was imposed on him, not that he might shew himself able to obey it, but that his total inability to obey it might be made manifest; and that, in this way, there might be afforded clear and incontrovertible evidence of the innate, entire, and all pervading enmity of man's mind to God. Law fulfilled by the Son of God appearing in the likeness of sinful flesh, is certainly no proof of sinful flesh itself having been able to fulfil it. On the contrary, the fact of its having required the interposition of the Creator himself before law could be fulfilled, indicates, apart from every other consideration, that if left to the mere fleshly mind of man, law must have remained unfulfilled for ever.* How can this be reconciled with the popular theory of man's ability to obey divine law?

So far as I have yet proceeded, in the sentiments expressed by me I have been, with greater or less precision, in a great measure anticipated by others. Man's opposition to God.

* Rom. viii. 1—8, affords the best commentary on and illustration of this view. Indeed, what is stated in the text, is in some measure an abridgment of the Apostle's reasoning.

evinced in violating divine prohibitions and disobeying divine commands, has attracted the notice of many writers on the subject of theology ; but there is a view of human enmity or opposition to God consisting, not in offering resistance to any law of God at all, but in maintaining the present existence of divine law and the present obligation of mankind to yield obedience to it, in express opposition to God declaring that he now imposes no law, and that he never intends at any future period to impose law upon man, which is not so common, which, indeed, it is questionable if any one yet have systematically and scripturally treated of. The state of things implied in this exhibits the climax of man's enmity to God. It is opposition carried out still farther than in merely disobeying law, and it is opposition carried out to its greatest possible extent. It is man opposing God, revealed not in the character of a lawgiver, but in that of a benefactor and saviour. Man, with the feelings of a slave, might have some excuse made for him when he shrank back from obedience to law ; but what terms are sufficient to characterise him, how awful the devilishness of his opposition to God, when he is looked at as habitually trampling under foot his own divine mercies. And yet this is the state of mind, this the nature and extent of the enmity to God, which mankind, professing to believe the truths revealed in the New Testament Scriptures, have for the last eighteen hundred years been displaying. During this long period, human beings have had no opportunity of disobeying divine law ; but they have had every opportunity of perverting gospel, and of this they have most decidedly availed themselves. Jehovah having previously afforded man opportunities of testifying his enmity to himself, by addressing to him divine law in the shape both of prohibition and command, is now winding up and closing his series of experiments upon human nature or of affording man opportunities of testifying his enmity to himself, by addressing to

him declarations that salvation and eternal life are bestowed freely. Not by abstaining from the violation of prohibitions, not by compliance with positive commands, is man to enjoy the divine favour; on the contrary, divine love it is now declared is actually, certainly, and as matter of fact, the present portion of man, and this apart from and independent of regard to or fulfilment of any condition whatever by him. Law, God declares, has passed away, having received its accomplishment in Christ Jesus; Rom. x. 4; also, Matt. v. 17, 18; and all spiritual and heavenly blessings, he further declares, are conferred irrespective of any law to be obeyed, or any righteousness to be performed by the creature, that is, are conferred unconditionally and as matter of fact. Jeremiah xxxi. 31—34. Heb. viii. 8—12. The opportunity being thus afforded, what is the result? Why that man now displays his enmity or opposition to God, not by disobedience to divine law, seeing that there exists no divine law which he can disobey, but by asserting, and by acting upon the principle, that divine law in some form or another does exist, and that obedience to it constitutes on the part of each individual the condition of his salvation. This, observe, is done by man in direct opposition to God asserting the very reverse, namely, that divine law does not exist and cannot exist, having been fulfilled by his own well beloved Son; and that so far from imposing laws on man, or exacting from him the fulfilment of any conditions whatever, he is bestowing on man, through the finished work of Christ, heavenly blessings and the enjoyment of the heavenly state freely. God declares that he is not now a lawgiver, man asserts that God is so; God declares that he is a Saviour as matter of fact, man asserts that God is so only conditionally; God declares that he *gives* his intelligent creatures eternal life, man asserts that God merely *offers* it to man, to be received or to be rejected by him as he may think fit. Man thus unhesitatingly and un-

ceremoniously gives the lie to God. This, certainly, is displaying enmity to God with a vengeance. It is the creature declaring, and what is more acting upon his declaration, that what God says is untrue; that a free salvation, which is God's salvation, is no salvation for him, being, according to his view of matters, not more unworthy of God to bestow, than of man to receive and enjoy; and that only a salvation towards the accomplishment of which he has in some one way or another himself contributed, a salvation for which he has himself either in whole or in part paid the price by his obedience to law, is what he will condescend to accept. When we consider the self-idolatry—the substitution of self for God, and the preference of laws imposed by self to declarations of a salvation bestowed freely which are made by God—implied in all this, can a more decided, a more awful exhibition of man's enmity to God be imagined? In disobeying divine law, there is not necessarily a denial of that law having emanated from God, and of the obligation of the creature to obey it. But in rejecting the gospel, God's declarations are necessarily stigmatised as false, and the authority of the creature is necessarily preferred to that of the Creator. Rom. i. 25. This is enmity to God displayed in its highest and most concentrated form. And as it is impossible for the intelligent creature to manifest it in a greater degree, or after a higher fashion than this, we may fairly conclude that this manifestation of it will be allowed to grow and increase until the cup of man's enmity shall be full; that is, until this its highest form having attained to the completeness of its development, the nature from which it has emanated, as having fulfilled its purposes, shall be swept away.*

* Luther, in his justly celebrated and valuable treatise on the Epistle to the Galatians, approaches the nearest to the truth in reference to this subject of any mere human writer with whose works I happen to be acquainted. The great scope of his observations is to shew, that Christ is not a lawgiver, but a saviour; and this point he handles frequently in a manner the most masterly.

Such, then, are the three grand experiments made by God on human nature : namely, first, the imposing of a law of prohibition ; secondly, the imposing of a law of command ; and, thirdly, the imposing of no law at all, but affording a manifestation of himself as conferring blessings freely. These experiments are not of my invention, but stand recorded in the Scriptures either as actually having been made, or as destined to be made in an age or æra subsequent to the completion of the sacred volume. Jerem. xxxi. 31—34. And, accordingly, one of them, the last, is now in process of taking place.

Still his views are defective. In the first place, he is constantly urging his readers to oppose views of divine law fulfilled by Christ to suggestions of guilt, not observing that in so doing he is contradicting himself, for all such exhortations are of the nature of laws, and imply a necessity of compliance, as well as a power of complying with them on the part of the creature ; whereas it is God himself who, irrespective of all creature efforts whatever, nay in opposition to all such efforts, is, in the case of the members of his church, superseding notions of the necessity of obeying law in order to salvation, by the manifestation to the conscience of the work of Christ in obedience to law as complete, and of our own personal interest in that work. And, in the second place, Luther does not appear to have had any idea at all of the distinction subsisting between the apostolic state of things and that which has succeeded : does not appear to have understood that, while the apostles lived and until Jerusalem was destroyed, faith was prescribed as a law and obedience to it rewarded with life everlasting ; Heb. xi. 6, Acts xvi. 31 ; whereas since that æra, salvation and life everlasting are bestowed without reference to any prohibition or command whatever addressed to the creature, are bestowed solely through God's manifestation to the individual of his own character in the face of his well beloved Son. Nay that prescriptions to believe, and directions how to apply to ourselves even gospel truths, are inconsistent with even his own theory of God being revealed not as a lawgiver, but as a saviour. Upon the whole matter, clear as Luther's sentiments in certain respects were, and much as I trust God has blessed them to many, he never seems to have been fully aware of the thorough supersession of every creature effort at obedience in true and spiritual religion, by means of the manifestation to the conscience by God himself of Christ's righteousness and life as ours, not conditionally but unconditionally, not contingently but as matter of fact ; and consequently he is chargeable with blunders and self-contradictions which must have been often sadly puzzling to readers of his work, and which have served to countenance and even to justify the still more grievous aberrations from truth of men professing to be his followers.

SECTION SECOND.

NUMBER, PERSONS, AND CLIMAX THREEFOLD.

ADMIRABLY calculated are these experiments to illustrate and confirm the abstract principle of enmity or opposition to God being not merely a characteristic of, but absolutely essential to the nature of man.

Considered with reference to their number, the exhibitions of enmity to which these experiments give birth do not tend to confuse, puzzle, or overwhelm the mind. They are only three. That is, however numerous and however diversified the details, they are capable of being brought under three heads, and reduced to three classes. They respect prohibitions violated—or commands disobeyed—or the declarations that God's blessings are freely and with absolute certainty bestowed, spurned at and trampled under foot. What can be conceived more simple than this?

Considered with reference to the persons who display enmity, the experiments are so conducted as to meet and answer a very obvious objection.—Is it urged to be hard and even unjust that the enmity of one, as brought out in the case of Adam, should be deemed conclusive evidence of the enmity of others? Opportunity is given to a whole nation most favourably situated, endowed with high privileges, and animated with the prospect of the conditional enjoyment of privileges still higher, to shew what is the spirit and what the temper of their minds. Need I say that it is the descendants of Abraham according to the flesh to whom I allude? They were tried, and, having been so, failed still more grievously and unequivocally than even Adam had done.—Is it still a source of murmuring that the experiment has been conducted hitherto on too limited a scale, and that the whole adult population of the earth, without regard to any

peculiarities of descent, clime, or condition, have not had an opportunity vouchsafed to them of shewing what they are and what they can do? Well, this form of the objection has likewise been anticipated. By the gracious condescension of Jehovah the experiment has been extended, or is in course of being extended to all nations. And what so far as it has gone has been the result? Is it not a more striking exhibition of enmity to God than had ever before taken place, with the the certain prospect of this exhibition, as ages roll on and as a larger number of mankind are made acquainted externally with divine revelation, growing in virulence and intensity? In other words, the greater the number tried, the more decided is man's opposition to God shewn to be.—What form of the objection now remains? None whatever. None, I mean, as respects the number of human beings who can be subjected to the test. The experiment certainly cannot be carried farther than to the adult portion of the whole human race indiscriminately.

This leads me to observe that considered with reference to their nature, God's experiments upon man, made in order to the manifestation or bringing out on man's part of his innate enmity to God, are so arranged as in all respects to assume the form of a climax. There is throughout the whole series a regular and constant progress from human enmity displayed in the lowest degree, to the same enmity displayed in the highest degree; and agreeably to this, or progressively advancing likewise, are all the circumstances connected with this enmity. Climax appears in the apparently slight effort which abstinence from violating the law of prohibition demanded;* in the greater effort required to abandon Jewish and Gentile prejudices,

* Merely to be required to abstain from eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil—the fruit of every other tree being conceded—was surely one of the least conceivable of all restraints. Gen. ii. 16, 17.

and fulfil the law of command;* and in the greatest of all efforts, the effort to put off human nature itself, (an effort, of course in which human nature never has succeeded and never can succeed,) indispensable before acquiescence in a salvation which is free, certain, and divine can be attained to.—The respective lengths of the periods during which the successive exhibitions of enmity take place also present us with an instance of climax. Extremely short was the period of Adam's probation in paradise; forty years were allotted to the fleshly church to evince their ability, or rather inability, to recognise in the person of Jesus of Nazareth their long-promised Messiah; while extremely long is the period of man's last and crowning trial, seeing that it reaches from the destruction of Jerusalem till the end of time.—Again, climax appears in the scale of the punishments which are meted out to man's several offences or exhibitions of enmity. Simple forfeiture of the earthly paradise and this present life is the first punishment; a forfeiture of their earthly church state by the descendants of Abraham, accompanied by exclusion of the Adamic nature from the heavenly church state and kingdom, is the second; and complete and everlasting destruction of that nature is the third.—Climax is also visible in the entirely miraculous state in which man originally was; in the partly miraculous and partly natural state in which the Israelites, throughout the whole period of their eventful history until the destruction of Jerusalem, were; and in the entirely natural state in which the human family, from the destruction of Jerusalem until the end of time, are.—Climax makes its appearance in the extremely limited knowledge and limited guilt of Adam; in the greater knowledge possessed and the greater guilt contracted by the Jews; and in the very great knowledge and very great guilt of mankind

* The command to believe on Jesus as the Messiah, Son of God and Saviour. Acts xiii. 38, 39, 46; xvi. 31.

living in the last æra or period of the world.—Climax, in the form of contrast—the most interesting form in which it appears—is obtruded on our notice by the whole series of God's experiments upon man. Adam, a single being, sinful and forfeiting the present life, corresponds to and yet stands contrasted with the second Adam, a single being, sinless and the source of life everlasting. The Jewish Church by their unbelief forfeiting the earthly kingdom and self-excluded from the heavenly one, correspond to and yet stand contrasted with the Christian Church by the grace of God introduced into the heavenly kingdom, and by the same grace preserved from forfeiting it. And the human race, as a whole, incurring that complete and everlasting punishment which consists in the complete and everlasting destruction of its Adamic nature, corresponds to and yet stands contrasted with the human race, as a whole, ultimately through its new creation in Christ Jesus made the recipient of everlasting blessedness.—In a word, climax characterises God's manner of conducting his experiments upon human nature and every circumstance connected with them. And in this, how great the display of divine wisdom! Man, from folly or inadvertency, is but too often in his controversies found following up arguments which are comparatively strong by such as are comparatively weak. God, however, as must be the case with him who is the All-wise, in the practical controversy which he is carrying on with man uniformly appears following up arguments which are less by arguments which are more cogent and convincing. He demonstrates man's entire enmity to himself, by strengthening his practical proofs of it at every step: proposing first the lowest; then such as are higher; until, having wound up the whole to its highest pitch of probation, he terminates at once this world and man's existence on it, thereby drawing the grand practical conclusion.

Such are God's experiments upon human nature, and is

his manner of teaching us what that nature is. Such his series of comments on his own inspired declarations concerning man's mind as enmity against himself, evinced in its not being subject to his law, neither, indeed, having ability to be so. Such his divine method of proving that even where no law of his exists, and where consequently man wants that opportunity of displaying his enmity which consists in the transgression of divine law, he will, nevertheless, take occasion to shew it by setting up laws of his own devising, and representing a self-imposed obedience to these laws as the condition of salvation : doing this in direct opposition to the whole scope and tenor of God's Word, which declares that no divine law now exists ; and that salvation is bestowed freely, or totally irrespective of any condition whatever performed or to be performed by any mere member of the human family.

The nature and importance of these divine experiments will, I trust, be better appreciated by my readers after I shall have gone through them in detail. That I might have the opportunity of doing so was my principal reason for undertaking this present work ; and however imperfectly it may be executed, this shall not be for want of endeavours on my part to fill up in a clear, systematic, and scriptural manner, the plan which I have sketched. Should I through the divine blessing attending my labours be in any measure successful, the result will be to produce in the minds of some a conviction that not merely disobedience to God's law as a matter of fact characterises man, but that real, active, and essential opposition to God is the source and principle of this disobedience ; and that a nature thus necessarily manifesting itself, because thus necessarily constituted, is fit for no other issue than that which actually awaits it,—complete and everlasting destruction.*

* Heb. vi. 8.

FIRST GRAND EXHIBITION OF
HUMAN ENMITY.

VIOLATION OF THE DIVINE PROHIBITION.

FIRST GRAND EXHIBITION OF HUMAN ENMITY.

EXPERIMENT MADE ON ONE MAN BY MEANS
OF THE DIVINE LAW OF PROHIBITION ;
RESULT, EXHIBITION OF ENMITY IN THE
FORM OF VIOLATION OF THAT LAW ;
PUNISHMENT INFLICTED, LOSS OF THE
PRESENT LIFE ; PLACE, PARADISE ; PERIOD,
FROM THE CREATION TILL THE FALL ;
STATE OF THINGS, MIRACULOUS.

SECTION FIRST.

PARADISIACAL STATE MIRACULOUS : SOULICAL NOT SPIRITUAL.

CORRECT notions respecting the paradisiacal state of Adam, or the situation and circumstances of man previous to the fall, have hitherto fallen to the lot of very few. Nevertheless such notions are extremely desirable, and may through the understanding of the Scriptures themselves be attained to.

Everything which we find recorded by the pen of inspiration concerning Adam, while in paradise, is miraculous ;

and need I observe that in enquiries which are strictly theological, except with what stands thus recorded we have nothing whatever to do? All besides the few facts which are divinely revealed must be at once and unhesitatingly dismissed from our minds, as carrying us into the regions of mere conjecture.—Adam we are informed was miraculously brought into existence; Gen. ii. 7; he was miraculously stationed in the garden of Eden; Ibid. 8, 15; he had a law miraculously given to him; Ibid. 16, 17; the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air were miraculously brought into his presence, and he was miraculously enabled to give names to them; Ibid. 19, 20; a partner in life,—a being at once his daughter and his spouse,—was miraculously created and introduced to him; Ibid. 21, 22; to him a knowledge of what is implied in the marriage relation* was miraculously communicated; Ibid. 23, 24; through the temptation of a serpent miraculously endowed with the gifts of intelligence and speech sin entered; Gen. iii. 1—6; through a miraculous divine appearance was a conviction of guilt produced, and were the respective sentences of the serpent, the woman, and the man pronounced; Ibid. 8—19; miraculously was clothing suggested to man and woman, as appropriate to their altered circumstances; Ibid. 21; and miraculously were they both expelled from Eden. Ibid. 22—24. Is not the preceding a fair abstract of the paradisiacal history?—In employing the words *miraculous* and *miraculously* my meaning is that, in every one of the facts recorded and just alluded to, God appears directly in the character of the actor, or superhuman power and wisdom are displayed.

And if the reason why miracles pervaded the whole of the paradisiacal history, or why every circumstance connected

* His observations on the subject having been figurative, or of the nature of a prophecy, as we learn from Ephesians v. 25—32; that is, these observations of his having been miraculously suggested to him.

with it was miraculous be enquired? the answer is obvious. In no way, except by God's immediate interposition and agency, could the events preceding or connected with the fall have taken place. Will any one venture to deny this? Surely it was only by a miracle that man could have been created. Only by a miracle could a being who was brought into existence, physically considered, a full-grown and mature man, and therefore destitute of all the experience which his posterity derive from passing through the successive stages of infancy, childhood, and youth, have been enabled to exercise his faculties and to perform even a single action intelligently. Considering indeed that the first man, although mature in form and stature, was but a grown infant in point of fact, just ask yourselves by what, except by a continued series of miracles, could he, for a time at least, have been preserved in life? Only by miraculous agency could a garden have been prepared for man's reception as soon as he was created, could a divine law have been given to him, and could the power of uttering and comprehending articulate sounds have been conferred. Only by a miracle could woman have sprung originally into being. In a word, only miraculously, or by immediate divine interposition, could any of the events spoken of in the second and third chapters of Genesis, and already briefly referred to, have taken place. Let persons divinely taught who may for a moment have been startled by the boldness and novelty of my averment give the subject but a moment's consideration, and they must see that I am in the right.

Miraculous interposition, however, must not be confounded with spirituality. Here it is that almost every writer who has ventured to treat of the paradisaic state of Adam has plunged headlong into error. The celebrated Thomas Boston, of Ettrick, is a remarkable instance of this.* Because Adam

* Should any of my readers feel inclined to peruse a religious romance, written apparently with all the seriousness of a man who was dealing only with

previous to the fall was in a state altogether miraculous; because God condescended directly to hold converse with him, to issue law to him, and to provide him with woman's desirable and delightful society; and because in every step which he took, before transgressing, God, according to the inspired record, was near him to regulate his actions and promote his comfort; therefore it has been concluded by the writer just named, and by a host of others, that Adam's mind was spiritual, his communion with God spiritual, and every thing else connected with his state and circumstances spiritual. Now it is scarcely possible to conceive of a mistake in religion greater than this, or one which, in consequence of the erroneous conclusions necessarily involved in it, has led to the concocting of more absurd and unscriptural theories. Instead of Adam's state previous to the fall having been spiritual, there was actually connected with it *no spirituality whatever*. Indeed it was the very reverse of spiritual. It was like him whose condition it was, *of the earth, earthy*. Adam's mind was soul, 1 Cor. xv. 45, or mind of flesh, Rom. viii. 5—7, not spirit. 1 Cor. xv. 45. 2 Cor. iii. 17. His body was of flesh and blood, Gen. ii. 7, Luke xxiv. 39, not spiritual body. Philip. iii. 21. 2 Cor. v. 1—4. His communion with God was external, not internal; was through the medium of human language, not by means of having had conferred on him the divine nature; was earthly, not heavenly. Every circumstance connected with paradise was calculated to gratify the bodily senses of Adam, and to inspire his mind with love to the earthly state and condition in which he had been created, and with desire for its continuance, not to elevate his mind to the anticipation and desire of a world that is heavenly and divine. In fact, of a world superior to that in which he dwelt, and of a state of things heavenly and therefore spiritual, facts, they are referred to the first part of Boston's "Fourfold State," or that which treats of man in his state of primeval innocence.

it was absolutely impossible for him previous to the fall even so much as to have formed the conception. During that period any thing spiritual *could not have been revealed to him*. Under these circumstances what room was there for spirituality of any kind? What room for the introduction and enjoyment of views and feelings which, as spiritual, belong to a world by which the pure earthly state of paradise, so far from being continued, was to be superseded and swept away for ever? Pure soulical enjoyments were the privileges of Eden's human inhabitants: nothing higher had they, and of nothing higher were they susceptible. Spiritual enjoyments belong not to the earthly paradise of Adam, but to the heavenly paradise of God. Luke xxiii. 43. Rev. ii. 7.

All this to myself and to such as have derived their views of the subject from the Scriptures themselves, is abundantly manifest. Not so, however, to the great majority of religious professors who, assuming human notions and representations of man's paradisiacal state for the basis of their respective theories, here enter upon a career of error which, perplexing them at every step, lands them at last in a maze of absurdities and inconsistencies, from which it is impossible for them, while they adhere to the dogmas with which they set out, to extricate themselves.

Ignorance of certain plain and elementary scriptural principles, under which those of whom I have just been speaking evidently labour, is the cause of their thus becoming the dupes of mere human fallacies.

1. They know nothing of the distinction, or rather opposition, subsisting between soul and spirit. This distinction is expressly laid down in 1 Cor. xv. 45: — *the first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit*. No matter that mankind in general, nominal Christians no less than heathens, have chosen to identify soul and spirit: it is enough for us who respect and love the

divine testimony, that the Holy Ghost hath seen meet to distinguish them. Soul we learn from this highest of all authorities, speaking in the passage just quoted as illustrated and confirmed by the context, verses 46—49, is the mind of Adam the creature, a being *of the earth, earthy*; spirit is the mind of the Lord Jesus the Creator, not as he appeared in flesh, but as glorified by being exalted to his heavenly throne.* This distinction, plainly as it is revealed, is generally overlooked if not even denied. Hence pure soul, or Adam's earthly mind as it existed in paradise before the fall, is almost universally confounded with spirit, or Christ's divine mind—the principle of which he became possessed or rather invested with which he was manifested subsequently to his resurrection and ascension. 2 Cor. iii. 17. Rev. xxii. 17. And hence, Adam is almost universally supposed to have possessed spiritual enjoyments in paradise: enjoyments which are in reality the portion of those who, being made new creatures in Christ Jesus, are in him elevated to the paradise of God; Rev. ii. 7; and enjoyments which, as having been absolutely inconsistent with the earthly paradisaic state, it was impossible for its inhabitants to have participated in, or even so much as dreamed of; nay, which could only be attained to in consequence of this very earthly paradise being done away with and brought to an end.—Closely connected with this is,

2. Ignorance of the merely shadowy nature and character of the earthly paradise. As the law was but *the shadow of better things to come*, and as every circumstance connected with the Mosaic church and dispensation was at the utmost merely a shadowy representation of some circumstance

* Jesus while on earth appeared invested, intellectually considered, with soul or the form of creature mind, Luke ii. 40, 52; Mark xiii. 32; just as he appeared invested, corporeally considered, with flesh and blood or the form of creature body: it was in his resurrection and ascension that he exchanged these for and elevated them into spirit and spiritual body, or became invested with forms which are heavenly and divine. Rom. viii. 9—11. See Phil. iii. 21.

connected with the church and dispensation of Christ Jesus, so was the earthly paradise itself nothing more than a shadow of the heavenly one. Not having understood this, men calling themselves theologians have expended their time and talents in vain attempts to endow the shadow with qualities which belong, and which can only belong, to the glorious substance. They have supposed Adam before the fall to have possessed a spiritual character; they have surrounded him with spiritual circumstances and enjoyments; and they have represented him as actuated by spiritual motives and tendencies. In short, according to them he was a spiritual man, placed in a spiritual state and condition. All this is most melancholy. It presents us with a view of matters no less absurd than it is unscriptural. Spiritual and substantial are, in so far as regards the present subject, synonymous and convertible terms. That is, to say that a creature or a state is spiritual, and to say that it is substantial, is one and the same thing. But the earthly paradise is admitted to have been shadowy by numbers who nevertheless profess to regard it as having been spiritual: a view which, when we consider spiritual to be the same as substantial, of course stands convicted of being arrant nonsense. Besides, to represent the earthly paradise as having been spiritual directly contradicts the Word of God, which is most careful to distinguish between* the natural or earthly state of Adam even at the best, Gen. ii. 6, 7, 1 Cor. xv. 47, and the spiritual or heavenly state of the glorified Son of God. Luke xxiv. 51. John xvii. 5. Acts i. 9—11. Ibid. iii. 21. Ibid. xiii. 33—35. Rom. i. 3, 4. 1 Cor. xv. 47. Even definitions and other inspired declarations apart, is not the shadowy nature of the earthly paradise and of all that was connected with it manifest, from the simple revealed fact that it passed away? And if so, how, consistently with common sense and the slightest attention to the meaning of language,

* Rather, to shew the opposition of—to.

can it be confounded with the heavenly paradise, a state of things which is proved to be substantial because it is everlasting? The fact is, what soul is to spirit, the earthly paradise was to the heavenly one. Adam the temporary possessor of soul, the passive recipient, ψυχὴ ζωσα, stood to Jesus the everlasting possessor and active bestower of spirit, πνεῦμα ζωοποιουον, in the relation of shadow to substance. The pure soulical state of the former was in every respect a beautiful emblem of the spiritual state of the latter; but it was nothing more.* Just so the earthly paradise was in every respect the shadow of the heavenly one; but it was nothing more either. All this fleshly religionists know nothing about. And hence the gross absurdity chargeable on the views of all of them, when, treating of the earthly paradisiacal state, they ascribe to it and to its shadowy enjoyments, spiritual properties: properties which, as substantial, belong and can only belong to its heavenly antitype, the paradise of God.†

3. There is exhibited on the part of mankind in general ignorance of the fact, that nothing which can come under the observation of the external senses, and nothing which is capable of being comprehended and enjoyed by mere fleshly mind, is or can be spiritual. Adam, it is freely acknowledged was, during his abode in paradise surrounded by all that could be

* Adam is expressly declared to have been *the figure* or *mould*, τύπος, of Christ Jesus, designated as *him that was to come*: Rom. v. 14: the fact of the former having been the figure of the latter holding true in respect of his *mind* no less than of his *body*. See Rom. vi. 17, *Greek*.

† A similar mistake is committed by vast numbers in respect to Eph. iv. 24. They ascribe to Adam in paradise the knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness of which the Apostle there speaks, supposing that the renewed ones become by grace what he originally was. Whereas the Apostle is there elliptically contrasting the ignorance, sinfulness, and false holiness of the *old man* Adam the *shadow*, as he existed in paradise, with the knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness of the *new man* Jesus the *substance*, as he reigns glorified at God's right hand. Adam possessed a *shadowy* knowledge, a *shadowy* righteousness, and a *shadowy* holiness, until he transgressed; in Jesus we have conferred upon us the *substance* of all these qualities. *Holiness of the truth* or *substance*, ὁσιότης τῆς ἀληθείας, thus evidently stands contrasted with *holiness of the shadow*.—Ὅσιότης, query, *graciousness*?

gratifying to his senses, and all that could minister pleasure to his mind, infantile and limited as it then was. In making this concession, I care not whether the continuance of the state of innocency may have been long or short. Even if protracted only to the length of a single day, Adam's creature enjoyments during that day were complete. He was in a garden of God's own planting. Gen. ii. 8. With one exception, Gen. ii. 16, 17, every species of food such as he then required or could relish, was placed within his reach, and rendered alluring to his taste, Gen. i. 29, 30. The whole animal creation was made subject to his control. Gen. i. 28. ii. 19, 20. A being of flesh and blood derived from himself was created to be his helpmate, and was united to him by the most endearing of all ties. Gen. ii. 20—24. God condescended to hold external communion with him. Gen. i. 29, 30. ii. 16, 17, 22. All this, and much more than this, did Adam originally enjoy. And all his enjoyments such as they were, until he eat of the forbidden fruit, were untainted by sin. But could any of these enjoyments be denominated spiritual? Or could any of them gratify spiritual mind? Certainly not. They were all, in one way or another, connected with the earth upon which Adam trod. They all belonged to the fleshly nature with which at his creation he had been invested. They were only suitable to, they could only be relished by a being who was *of the earth, earthy*. They all came *with observation*.* Luke xvii. 20. They could be seen by the eye, and heard by the ear, and as earthly themselves all the impression which they were calculated to make was only on an earthly or fleshly mind. What,

* *With outward show*, μετα παρατηρησεως. Dr. Campbell says, *with parade*. The observation of Mr. Granville Penn, in his Annotations to the Book of the New Covenant, (London, 1837,) is, "verse 20, *observation*. Παρατηρησεως, the Greek word requires to be paraphrased to extract its true sense. Euthymius explains it well, by μετα περιφανειας ανθρωπινης, '*with human discernment*.' Campbell translates, *ushered in with parade*, which exaggerates its simple meaning."

however, are spiritual things? Like the kingdom with which they are connected and apart from which they cannot be enjoyed, they come *not with observation*, that is, are not external. The vulture's eye, with all its perspicacity, never yet tracked them. The boasted subtilty of the human intellect, as exercised by its mightiest masters, never yet conceived of them. Whether enjoyed on earth in earnest, or in heaven in full fruition, spiritual privileges equally elude the human senses and the human mind. *Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to form any conception of them.* Isaiah lxiv. 4. 1 Cor. ii. 9. Spiritual therefore, as having been external and earthly, the enjoyments of Adam in paradise were not and could not be.

Soul when made spirit is of earth no more.

FESTUS. 2d Edu.

Nor in Scripture are they so denominated. The utmost that can be said of them is that they were soulical. Purely soulical, if you will, before the entrance of sin: but still merely soulical. That is, they were suited to Adam's soul or mind of flesh, the only mental principle conferred on him at his creation, Gen. ii. 7, and the only mental principle which, except through Christ Jesus, he ever could have possessed. 1 Cor. xv. 45. As external themselves, they appertained to him as a part of the external system in connexion with which he had been created. True, as we have seen, the soulical enjoyments of Adam in paradise were the shadows of the spiritual enjoyments of the church in the heavenly state. But for this very reason, the former neither were nor could be spiritual: soulical enjoyments, even although pure, by being external and earthly, standing opposed to enjoyments which are internal and heavenly; and it being therefore one of the grossest of all misnomers, as well as calculated to involve all divine teaching in obscurity and confusion, to

apply the word spiritual, which is expressive of a state of things with which the senses have no concern whatever, to a state of things such as the earthly paradise, in which the pleasures of sense, refined although they might be, were all that could be either conceived of or enjoyed.

4. Ignorance of the fact, that the blessings conferred through the Son of God are in no respect whatever a restoration of those which were originally vouchsafed to Adam, and which he possessed during his sojourn in the earthly paradise, is another and a copious source of blundering in regard to the subject matter of which we are now treating. "Restoration of Adam's state of paradisiacal holiness and purity;" "recovery of what at the period, and by means of the fall, was forfeited;" "restitution of the divine image lost in Adam;" these, and phrases of kindred import, are continually issuing from the pens, and heard from the lips, of religious professors. But all such expressions, as well as the idea implied in them, are based on falsehood. However numerous may be the supporters of the notion that *God restores through Christ what Adam lost*, in this, as in many other instances, the *vox populi* is not the *vox Dei*. Milton may as a poet write, and write most sweetly and enchantingly, on the theme of "Paradise Regained;" but the living God, who is the God of truth, may be all along cautioning us against such a view as a mere dream of man's sickly fancy, and proclaiming, that the earthly paradise once forfeited was forfeited for ever. And so God does. The whole of the inspired volume proceeds upon two, among other principles: first, that a spiritual, which is a heavenly state of things, cannot pass away; Heb. xii. 26—28; and, secondly, that the soulical state having once passed away, so far from being restored is in due time replaced and superseded by the spiritual one. Rom. v. 21. 1 Cor. xv. 53, 54. Heb. viii. 8—12. Scarcely can any thing more absurd, not to say unscriptural, be conceived,

than the ideas and language of ordinary professors of religion with regard to this subject. "Adam," say they, "was at his creation a spiritual man, and delighted in spiritual enjoyments. This, his primeval condition, he forfeited by disobedience; and yet not for ever: for in due time the spiritual state and enjoyments thus originally his are restored to us through Jesus Christ." Restored to us? Is then Jesus, the Creator, the source to us of nothing more than what Adam, the creature, in paradise possessed? Had the entrance of sin, the loss of Eden, the forfeiture of this present life, the introduction of the law, the whole recorded history of the children of Israel, the appearance of our blessed Lord in flesh, his death and resurrection from the dead, and all the revolutions of states and empires by which the realisation of God's plans is preceded, no higher object, than merely to replace us in the circumstances in which our first parents at their creation were? Can this be possible? The want of wisdom, as well as love, which is thus imputed to God, forbids the supposition. For if true, might not human suffering and death have been spared, and matters have been allowed to remain in paradise on the footing on which they originally stood? Viewed as intended to afford an opportunity for the display of man's enmity to God, and to lay the foundation of God's ultimately superseding human nature by the divine nature, the paradisaic state is gloriously intelligible and instructive. But if human nature and the earthly paradisaic state are to be restored, pray what lesson have the Scriptures been conveying? Besides, if paradise was once lost, and if, after all, it is merely to the same paradise we are to be restored, who can help the intrusion of the idea that what was once forfeited may be forfeited again, and forfeited, too, with more awful results than formerly? All reasonings apart, however, the word of God expressly condemns the doctrine of man being restored through Christ to Adam's pristine state of

creature purity and happiness : maintaining, in opposition to it, the principle of there being bestowed on us, through Christ, what Adam naturally never had, and consequently what Adam naturally never lost—of Adam having forfeited the earthly paradise, and of God through Christ, so far from *restoring* this, *bestowing* upon us the heavenly one.—“ Oh ! this is just what we mean,” exclaim, probably, some of the sticklers for the restoration doctrine. “ It has always been our purpose to maintain that God in Christ gives us something more, and something better, than the state and privileges which Adam originally possessed.” Does he ? Then, if language have any meaning at all, he does not *restore* to us what Adam by his one act of transgression forfeited. And we may reasonably hope, that from such persons we have heard the phrase of “ God *restoring* through Christ the blessings of the earthly paradise,” for the last time.—Do they hesitate ? Is there still a hankering after the doctrine and phraseology of *restoration* ? Then, depend upon it, the subject is not understood. None but those who are ignorant of the truth can ever cherish the slightest doubt as to the following principles : — Adam forfeited what was soulical and earthly ; Jesus, so far from *restoring* these, bestows what is spiritual and heavenly. In Adam, we lost the purity of creature nature ; in Jesus crucified and glorified, so far from having this creature purity *restored* to us, we become partakers of the divine nature. The incorruptible nature of Christ, so far from *restoring*, *supersedes* the corruptible nature of Adam ; the immortal nature of Christ, so far from *restoring*, *supersedes* the mortal nature of Adam : so that the latter, instead of being either *restored* or *perpetuated*, is swallowed up in the former. These statements are among the A B C, the merest elements, of spiritual Christianity. What possibility is there of reconciling them with the views popularly current on this subject ? The true view of the matter is, that an inferior and earthly state of things

which certainly was not spiritual passed away, and passed away for ever, through the first Adam's one transgression: God rendering the passing away of it subservient to the manifestation and conferring of a superior and heavenly state of things which is spiritual, through the righteousness of the second Adam, the Lord from heaven. There is then nothing that is spiritual *restored* through Christ, because there is nothing spiritual to *restore*; but the soulical state of creature purity, which originally belonged to man, having come to an end through Adam's forfeiture of it, the spiritual state is through Jesus for the first time revealed, and, as heavenly and divine, supersedes for ever all that can boast nothing higher than an earthly and creature origin.

Other instances of human ignorance, in regard to the primal and paradisiacal state of Adam, might if necessary be adduced: let those which I have given suffice. To persons who are desirous of further information on the subject, a perusal of the works of the Rev. Robert Riccaltoun, of Hobkirk, is recommended. In my "Three Questions Proposed and Answered," under the heads of Questions First and Second, an attempt is made, and I hope successfully, to expose the fallacy which is involved in representing Adam's original state of innocence to have been spiritual. A conviction of the hollowness of the popular theory respecting the spirituality of the Adamic state, has been manifested in several other quarters *

* For instance, by the late Mr. Thorpe, of Bristol, and John Eagleton, of Huddersfield. The "Thoughts on the Covenant of Works," of the latter, although not in all respects original, and not in my apprehension exhibiting sufficient manliness, is a production of considerable merit, and containing many valuable suggestions. Mr. Sankey and Mr. Mulock have maintained the distinction between *soul* and *spirit*, and have pointed out some of the very important consequences which are involved in it: the former, in a pamphlet which I have not at present in my possession, and the title of which I forget; the latter, in his "Two Letters on the Mystery of the Gospel." The works of Pirie, of Newburgh, will be consulted by all who wish to go more

The fact is that whatever Adam in paradise might be, he was not a spiritual man ; and whatever his state might be, it was not a spiritual state. Over and above what has been urged already in proof of this, it may be suggested, that to suppose Adam to have been by nature spiritual, is to place him who was confessedly but a mere creature, and who was but *the figure of him who was to come*, Rom. v. 14, upon a footing of equality with his glorious antitype, *the Second Man, the Lord from heaven*, of whom spirituality is the grand characteristic ; 1 Cor. xv. 44—49 ;* nay, that the theory of

deeply into the subject: for although occasionally confused, inaccurate, and inconsistent, Pirie has considerable claims to acuteness and originality of thought; and from Riccaltoun and himself (if he did not himself derive his views from Riccaltoun), succeeding writers have, sometimes without due acknowledgment, adopted no small proportion of their theories as to the paradisiacal state.

* How curiously do extremes sometimes meet. Evangelical professors of religion, as they style themselves, find fault with Socinians for degrading the Creator to a level with the creature ; and so unquestionably Socinians do. By making the Lord Jesus a mere man, they assign to him no higher a rank than that possessed by *soulical* Adam. What, however, is the practice of these their pious antagonists? Do they not represent Adam as having been originally *spiritual*, that is, do they not represent him as having been originally what Jesus by his death and resurrection subsequently became; and thus acting, do they not elevate Adam the creature, to the level of Jesus the Creator? Are they not just as decidedly, although in the opposite way, doing that which they adduce as grave matter of charge against the Socinians, namely, confounding the creature with the Creator? Socinians, to be sure, accomplish this by depressing the Creator to the level of the creature; and the so-called evangelical, by elevating the creature to the level of the Creator. But in the one case and the other, whether Adam and Jesus be represented as both naturally *soulical*, or as both naturally *spiritual*, are they not both equally confounded? Is not the distinction, or rather opposition, subsisting between the one and the other, on both principles equally lost sight of? Surely those who confound the creature with the Creator, whether it be done by making both *soulical* and earthly, or both spiritual and heavenly, can scarcely prefer a claim to be attended to when they are found indulging in the language of strong and unqualified censure upon each other. How easily is this confounding of things that differ avoided by seeing that the *soulical* Adam, the temporary occupant of the earthly paradise, stands distinguished from the Lord Jesus, the *spiritual* Adam, the everlasting inhabitant of the heavenly one. And by seeing that the former, as a mere creature, was the precursor of and subservient to the latter, as the glorious Creator. Rom. v. 14. 1 Cor. xv. 45. Then is the

Adam having been originally spiritual, taken along with the doctrine which almost invariably accompanies it of *his having possessed a right, after a certain period of abstinence from evil, to claim admission into the heavenly glory*, actually places the creature above the Son of God : who so far from having acquired a right to heaven by his abstinence from evil during the days of his flesh, only thereby became entitled to exemption from the punishment of death as inflicted by the hands of another ; John x. 18 ; and whose right of admission into the kingdom of God rested, not on perfect abstinence from evil during the continuance of his fleshly state, but on the sacrifice or destruction of his fleshly nature, and of the fleshly state itself as necessarily standing connected with it. Phil. ii. 8, 9 ; also Matt. xvi. 21, Acts ii. 24, Heb. xii. 2.*

restoration theory, with all its absurdities and its direct assault on Scripture, at once and effectually got rid of. Whether on Socinian principles a second creature, in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, be represented as succeeding the first, or on ordinary evangelical principles a second spiritual being, in the person of Jesus, be represented as succeeding the former spiritual one, a state of things which formerly existed is represented as being merely brought back or restored. Not so, however, when the soulical Adam is shewn to have been succeeded and superseded by the spiritual Jesus—the shadowy creature and his earthly system to have given place to and to have been set aside by the substantial Creator and his heavenly system. Restoration is in such a case entirely out of the question : for the soulical and earthly system, having been temporarily summoned into being, is upon such principles shewn in due time to pass away, not that it may be brought back again, but that the spiritual and heavenly system, in subserviency to which it had its ephemeral existence, may appear superseding it by swallowing it up for ever.—By the way, is there not something amusing (amusing, were it not blasphemous—revolting is the word), in representing Adam as having forfeited or lost spirituality ? If so, then what is spiritual may be lost ! But according to popular theories we recover in Christ what we lost in Adam—we recover in the Son of God what we forfeited in the mere creature. Query, what, if this were true, is to insure us against the forfeiture of spirituality again ?

* This is implied in our Lord's language, which we find recorded Luke xvii. 10. A spiritually enlightened and reflecting mind will at a glance perceive that no being subject to law, however perfect his obedience may be, can claim any higher reward than merely exemption from punishment ; and that, in order to enjoy a higher reward, the obligation of law must be got rid of. A being subject to law can never do more than it is *his duty to do* ; and hence as

Every possible consideration, indeed, corroborates the grand doctrine for which I am contending, that pure soucality or creature nature, not spirituality or the divine nature, characterised Adam in paradise previous to his transgression. And yet, why gratuitously burden myself with the proof that Adam's paradisiacal state was not spiritual? Am I not entitled to settle the whole matter at once by demanding from antagonists evidence that it was so? Let those who assert that Adam as he issued from God's hands was more than a pure soulful man, and who would invest him as he existed innocent in paradise with all the traits and attributes of spirituality or the divine nature, produce a single passage of Scripture declaring that he was originally spiritual, and that having forfeited by transgression this his original spirituality of state and character, it has been restored to man by Christ Jesus—let them do this, I say, and they may count on my abandonment of my present views, and my hearty adoption of theirs—but not till then.

Sorry should I be were I, after all, to be misunderstood. Not only do I admit, rather do I maintain, that the state of Adam in paradise, judging from the divine record, (and we have nothing else on which to rest our views, and from which to draw conclusions,) was entirely miraculous; but I am free to admit likewise that even his human nature, soulful and fleshly as it was, must in various respects have been constituted differently from what human nature now is. A pure soul must have differed from one which is stained with sin; a being

to any higher claim than exemption from punishment, he is a δούλος ἀχρεῖος, *an unprofitable servant*. Acting upon this principle our Lord became *the end of the law for righteousness*, through that last act of obedience of his *to the commandment which he had received of the Father*, the sacrifice of himself; John x. 18; and then, but not till then, did he ascend to glory. Phil. ii. 8, 9. Law ended through the last act of obedience to it which it demanded and which it was capable of receiving; and then, through the resurrection, *law* became swallowed up in *love*. John xix. 30.

who could hold external communion with God, to whom indeed such communion appears to have been familiar, must have differed from one to whom such intercourse is now utterly unknown ; a being to whom fruits sufficed for food, and who neither required nor was permitted to indulge carnivorous propensities, must have differed somewhat from one in whose case the use of animal food is almost essential to the full development of his powers and capabilities ; a being who, even after transgression, could live for nearly a thousand years, must have differed materially as to the structure and endurance of his physical frame, from one to whom threescore and ten or fourscore years now constitute the ordinary limit of existence ; and a being who could number a race of giants among his descendants, was probably himself of more than the present tallest stature. Admitting, however, all these differences,—and many more connected with them or springing out of them, may legitimately enough be conceived of,—they militate nothing against the grand fact so emphatically declared in Scripture, and at such length already insisted on by me, that Adam in paradise was only an earthly man, and his nature only an earthly nature. 1 Cor. xv. 47, with Gen. ii. 7. Miraculous his situation then was, but spiritual it was not. Nay, because it was entirely miraculous, therefore it was not at all spiritual. Before spirituality could come in, and the spiritual man could be revealed, it behoved the earthly nature of Adam to shew by transgression what even in its state of purity and innocence it had been, and thereby to forfeit that state—to shew that by miraculous influence alone it had been upheld, and that whenever miraculous influence was withdrawn it could not help sinking to its own level. This fact of the spiritual state not having been the original state of man, but having required his original state to pass away before it could be introduced, is actually the sub-

ject matter of express divine declaration: *Howbeit, that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is soulical;** and afterwards that which is spiritual.† 1 Cor. xv. 46.

Upon this natural and creation state of man I have dwelt the longer as it is but rarely understood, and as clear and scriptural views respecting it are essential to a right apprehension of the divine procedure towards man. He who fancying that Adam was originally a spiritual being, and that Jesus restores the spirituality which Adam lost, is determined to adhere to this notion at all hazards, may not only close this book, but may as well discontinue henceforth his perusal of the Scriptures themselves. He is setting out with a false principle, and in maintaining it as he does, is giving the lie to God: a course of conduct which, unless sovereign grace interpose and prevent, can only terminate in his plunging more and more into the quagmire of ignorance and error, and thereby increasing more and more the darkness, perplexities, and anguish of his own mind.

* *Animal*, Archbp. Newcome, G. Penn, &c. A translation correct enough. Clear it is that *natural* is not the proper English word for ψυχικός, but for φυσικός. My only ground for preferring *soulical* or *soulish* is its keeping before the mind of the unlettered reader the connexion between the adjective and the substantive, otherwise apt to be lost sight of. *Soul* and *soulical*, as translations respectively of ψυχή and ψυχικός, are more likely to impress the mind with a sense of the relation in which the one word stands to the other, than to render the one *soul* and the other *animal*.

† Σωμα, *body*, no doubt understood. But the declaration as to the *soulical* preceding the *spiritual* is, it is manifest from the context, verses 44, 45, as applicable to the mind as to the body; or the general import of the passage is that human nature as soulical, and therefore inferior, behoved in all respects to go before, and thereby to pave the way for the divine nature as spiritual, or superior.

SECTION SECOND.

THE OBJECT'S NATURE AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE FIRST EXPERIMENT ON MAN.

To what then was the creation of Adam in a state of soulcal innocence and purity subservient?

Answer first.—Directly to God's having the opportunity of making an experiment upon man and man's nature. Was the mind of man, as originally existing, in perfect agreement with that of God, or was opposition between man and God essential to the very constitution of human nature? This question was to be solved. And, for this purpose, the experiment was to be made upon a single human being placed in the very favourable external circumstances which have been already described. I say, a single human being: for Eve was one flesh with Adam, Gen. ii. 24; and the prohibition which was imposed originally upon Adam alone, Ibid. 16, 17, previous to her formation, could only have become obligatory upon her as having been in him and thereby one with him when it was issued. See Heb. vii. 10. Unquestionably her concurrence in what Adam might do, rather her preceding him in transgression, Gen. iii. 1—6, 1 Tim. ii. 14, was requisite in order to the completeness of his act. But apart from his sin, hers would have counted for nothing. For all practical purposes, then, Adam and Eve in the matter of this divine experiment fall to be regarded as one.

Answer second.—Indirectly, the creation state of Paradise, and any experiment to which its occupant might be subjected, were subservient to the carrying into effect of certain ulterior purposes of God. Upon the issue of the experiment made by God in the case of pure and innocent Adam, depended God's making further experiments upon human beings, and thereby vouchsafing further revelations of himself.

All this becomes abundantly plain when we consider what God is, and what is the relation in which man stands to God. God's infinite wisdom precludes the possibility of chance having had any thing whatever to do with the matter of man's transgression; just as God's infinite power laughs to scorn the idea of any creature having been able to frustrate his purposes. Man was God's creature, invested with the nature which God saw meet to confer on him; and in Paradise, a place prepared for him by God, was he temporarily stationed, where by circumstances, every one of divine arrangement, he was surrounded. Therefore all that happened to him, and all that he did, were necessarily according to the divine purpose and pre-appointment. Upon him, by God himself through an instrumentality adapted to the end aimed at, was an experiment made; and this experiment had, and could not but have had the result which actually took place.

Having ascertained these things, then proceed we to inquire how, or by what steps, was the first experiment made by God on man conducted. ?

It was,

1. By placing man after his creation, as a pure and innocent being of *the earth, earthy*, in a state and in circumstances, physically and externally considered, of the utmost happiness and enjoyment.

2. By imposing on man a single law, as the test of his gratitude, and of his ability to yield obedience to God. This law was of the nature of a prohibition, the lightest kind of all law, as requiring not active performance, but merely passive abstinence from performance;* and the prohibition itself was the lightest of its kind, requiring not abstinence from much where little had been conceded, but abstinence from a mere trifle where all besides had been conceded. †

* *Thou shalt not eat.* Gen. ii. 17.

† *Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat.* Gen. ii. 16.

3. By fencing the prohibition with a sanction, that sanction having been, not as is commonly but erroneously supposed the promise of gain in the event of the creature abstaining, but the threatening of loss in the event of the prohibition being violated. God's language to Adam was not, "If thou abstainest, I will give thee as thy reward life in a higher state of being;" but, "If thou abstainest not, I will deprive thee, as the appropriate punishment of thy crime, of the life thou now hast."* Adam's highest obedience then, in this his creation state, could only have been abstinence from evil; his highest reward, exemption from punishment.

4. By dealing with him miraculously in all cases save one. Adam the grown infant, without knowledge and without experience, is taken under the special guidance and care of God: God places him in Eden; God teaches him language; God issues to him a law; God provides a help-mate for him; and so on. God in none of these cases leaves him to himself. Human nature could not under such circumstances—could not thus miraculously guided and supported—shew what it was. What then was to be done in order that it might appear in its true colours? Leave it to itself. And this in one instance and in one instance only, as the inspired record informs us, God actually did.

5. By so arranging matters that an inducement to violate the divine prohibition should be presented to Adam's mind. This is done through the medium of a creature; and that creature, too, inferior in the scale of being to Adam himself. God his superior had said, *Thou shalt not eat*; the serpent his inferior says, *Eat*, and follows up this his counter injunction by every species of motive and inducement likely to prevail with Adam to do so.† Now comes the pinch of the experiment. Which of the two, the Creator prohibiting or

* *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

† Gen. iii. 4, 5.

the creature persuading, is by man to be listened to? To which of the two is he to yield obedience, by so doing evincing the genuine bias and tendency of his mind?

This is the whole process of the first experiment upon man, fairly and I think scripturally stated.

The whole experiment may be described as the application of a test to man's nature, with a view to ascertain,

First, man's capability not of doing good, but merely of abstaining from evil. *Virtus est vitium fugere*,* says Horace in the name of his favourite sect: a body of men who, as possessing clear views of the mere negative character of all human excellence, entertained far more accurate notions concerning human nature than many who call themselves Christians appear ever to have even dreamed of.

Secondly, man's capability of deserving, not to rise higher in the scale of being, but of continuing even in the rank and situation in which he had been created.

In other words, this first experiment was not positive but negative. Had Adam resisted the temptation successfully, he would have gained nothing: a right to continue as he was being the utmost that by such mere abstinence from evil he could have acquired or enjoyed. Abstinence from evil a thing merely negative, could only have entitled him to exemption from punishment itself also negative. His creation state was one in which he was to continue to live, if he could, by abstaining from disobedience; not a state from which he might rise to the acquisition of a higher life by obedience.† Positive obedience to a command entitling to the positive reward of heavenly life and happiness, is some-

* Epistol. Lib. 1; Epist. 1, L. 41. See also Ibid. Epist. 16, *Nec furtum feci, nec fugi*, &c.

† To rise by obedience from earth to heaven was the work of Jesus Christ the Creator, not of Adam the creature. And the act of obedience on the part of Christ which entitled to this reward, was not compliance with law while continuing subject to it, but was the sacrifice of himself, the last act of obedience

thing essentially different from what was prescribed to Adam in Paradise.*

I am the more careful and earnest in pressing this point, on account of the extremely small number of persons who have had their attention directed towards the difference in question, and the confusion of mind which in consequence of this is found almost universally to prevail with regard to what was actually required of Adam, and what was the result actually involved in his obedience or disobedience. Nothing can be conceived more different—and how important this, when we come to observe the scriptural application of the difference—than a law of prohibition, non-violation of which only negatively preserves from punishment, and a law of command, obedience to which entitles positively to a reward.

SECTION THIRD.

RESULT OF THE EXPERIMENT, FIRST EXHIBITION OF ENMITY.

The result of the experiment made on Adam now demands our attention.

Observe, that a perfect agreement between man's mind and the mind of God would not necessarily have been evinced by man's successful resistance to the temptation of the serpent; because his success might have been owing to the extremely slender nature of the temptation, and because therefore a more stringent law, followed up by a stronger temptation, might have overcome his powers of resistance, and brought to light principles of opposition to God which in reality previously existed although previously latent. And it is upon

to law on his part of which he was capable. In this last act of obedience of his, law ended and righteousness was complete. Rom. x. 4. Complete righteousness then necessarily stood connected with complete life. Phil. ii. 8, 9.

* Compare Gen. ii. 16, 17, with Matt. xxii. 37—40, and John x. 18, where you have the law given to Christ; and with Phil. ii. 8, 9, and Heb. xii. 1, 2, where you have the reward promised to Christ.

this ground I presume, as well as for other reasons, that in our Lord's case the Holy Ghost, in Matt. iv. 1—11, is not satisfied with mentioning one instance of successful resistance to temptation on the part of the Son of God, but carries us upwards through a series of such triumphs on his part, beginning at the lowest and ending with the highest. Contrariwise, however, if man placed in the most favourable external circumstances was induced by the most trifling of all temptations to violate the slightest and least galling of all prohibitions, then is the native enmity of his mind to God decisively and satisfactorily proved. For if he could not abstain from disobeying that, abstinence from disobeying which involved scarcely the shadow of an exercise of self-denial on his part, *a fortiori* what power had he to abstain from violating laws, the observation of which would have required efforts of self-denial of a more vigorous and painful description? Sinking before a slender temptation, it is not merely a logical inference, but matter of necessity, that he must have yielded to stronger temptations and more powerful inducements to evil. Adam, with every earthly motive to gratitude and obedience, breaking through the very easy if not even trifling restraint under which he had been laid, must afford evidence of the native enmity of the fleshly mind to God the most powerful and complete.

Well then, the result of the experiment was that Adam did violate the single and apparently light and easily borne divine prohibition. Nay, so far from resisting, he actually surrendered at the very first summons of the enemy. Listen to the language of the sacred narrative:—

Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made; and he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the

fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that, in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat. Gen. iii. 1—6.

Such was the result of the first experiment made by God on man—such the first exhibition of enmity to God on man's part. Man, previously without sin, by eating of the forbidden fruit became chargeable with sin; and his posterity, seminally included in him and thus one with him, sinned in him: his violation of the divine law having been the sin not merely of himself as an individual, but of that nature which he and his descendants possess in common.

Not that man's previous abstinence from evil implied any previous possession of positive righteousness on his part, or that his nature underwent any radical and essential change by means of transgression. Quite the contrary. Man's nature was from its very beginning *of the earth, earthy*. Gen. ii. 7, 1 Cor. xv. 47. His mind was from the first soul, not spirit; 1 Cor. xv. 45; fleshly mind, not heavenly mind. Rom. viii. 5—7. All the righteousness which previous to the fall he could boast of was merely negative. It consisted in nothing more than in his having previously abstained from the actual commission of the one possible offence. And this, again, sprang from the circumstance of the temptation to offend not having been previously presented to him. By the result it is made evident that, at whatever time the temptation might have been thrown in his way, the same consequence of transgression would have followed. Adam's nature, therefore,

was from its very origin, and even while free from actual transgression, essentially just what it was after actual transgression had taken place: its temporary freedom from evil having been merely accidental to it, while enmity or opposition to God constituted its very essence; and the temptation, when presented and when successful, having merely brought to light and made manifest what, for want of opportunity to display itself, had previously eluded observation.

Adam's one transgression, then, rendered not his nature hostile to God, but merely proved it to be so. Violating the prohibition, he made apparent the negative and utterly worthless character of his previous righteousness, at the same time that he brought to light the enmity to God which had lain latent in his constitution from his very origin. A mind at one with that of God, under such circumstances as those in which our first progenitor was placed, would as a matter of course have spurned from it with abhorrence a temptation to violate divine law. Like his divine descendant, Adam himself, had there existed a perfect agreement between his nature and that of God, would have greeted the suggester of falsehoods with a *Get thee behind me, Satan*. But possessing a nature which stood opposed to that of God, Adam at once and unhesitatingly seized upon the very first opportunity which was thrown in his way, of shewing that this was the case. *Eat not*, said God. Notwithstanding this, as soon as tempted Adam did eat.

This was the first grand exhibition of man's enmity to God; the first, I mean, of the series of exhibitions of that enmity of which in this work I professedly treat.

SECTION FOURTH.

COMPARATIVELY LOW RANK OF THE FIRST EXPERIMENT EXHIBITION OF ENMITY AND PUNISHMENT.

Decided however, as this exhibition of enmity to God on man's part was, and important and deplorable as have been the consequences involved in it, I must remark that, of the whole series, it was by far the lowest as well as the most susceptible of palliation, as may be easily made to appear from the following considerations :—

1. Adam's transgression was committed against knowledge of the slenderest kind. Our great progenitor was, as we have seen, by the very circumstances of his creation a mere grown infant—totally destitute of all the information derived from experience, which the adult portion of his posterity necessarily possess. What from experience could he know of the consequences of neglecting warnings of sin,—of death,—of judgment? Indeed, what correct idea was he capable of forming even concerning the meaning of the terms employed by God, in forbidding transgression? Besides let it be considered that all the knowledge which he had previous to the fall, such as it was, was entirely and exclusively *soulical*: it having been impossible to reveal what was *spiritual*, or what alone in divine matters is instructive, until after the entry of sin had taken place.* Now is guilt contracted under such disadvantages, for a single moment to be compared with guilt incurred amidst the most enlarged opportunities of acquiring

* The tree, the fruit of which was forbidden, was the tree of the knowledge of good as well as of evil; that is, without eating of it, good or what was spiritual could not have been known and enjoyed. And so the event proved: for the first spiritual intimation, or first communication of the knowledge of good, was subsequent to the fall. Gen. iii. 15.

knowledge—incurred indeed in spite of a large mass and stock of knowledge actually possessed?

2. The sin of Adam was committed by a being who, up to the time of the serpent's temptation, seems never to have been left to himself. Judging from the inspired narrative, God at every preceding part of his career was miraculously guiding and upholding him. In his exposure to the serpent's wiles, he was for the first time thrown upon his own resources and left to shew what he was. Now are we not prepared to make large allowances for a young person, previously acting only under the guidance of the parental eye, compelled for the first time to shift for himself? Are we very much surprised if one so circumstanced should commit mistakes? And do we as severely censure him for going astray as we should do an adult, hackneyed in the ways of the world, and long accustomed to self dependence and self decision in his actions? Certainly not. Let Adam's case be tried by this fair and obvious standard, and it will be found that his transgression exhibits the *minimum* of atrocity with which human guilt, as brought out through the medium of the experiments which we are considering, is chargeable.

3. Adam's criminality was not spontaneous or self originated on his part. He was operated upon from without. A temptation was presented to him, and under the influence of that temptation he fell. True, the temptation was, comparatively speaking, a slight one. Perhaps the slightest conceivable. And the tempter himself was so contemptible, his object so transparent, and the means by which he carried his point so gross, that we are ready to think a child might have seen through and escaped the snare laid for him. Yet, be it considered, that what to others might have been scarcely any temptation at all, was to Adam an irresistible one. A being like him, who had never previously heard the language of kindness except as conjoined with truth—to

whom was proposed the rank of Deity, an object of the most alluring kind—and the selfishness of whose nature was directly and powerfully operated on thereby—may in these circumstances find no small palliation for the crime which he was induced to perpetrate. He no doubt shewed egregious folly, as well as the inherent enmity of his nature, in listening to the creature rather than to the Creator. But has any one of his posterity ever transgressed under circumstances more excuseable than his?

Strong extenuating circumstances may thus be pled in the case of Adam.—Indeed, it is a striking fact that, in the whole series of experiments upon human nature to which our attention is now directed, the degree of man's guilt is exactly measured by the number of individuals tried. Sinfulness as displayed by a single human being is the least atrocious; as displayed by a particular nation, it rises in the scale; until at last, as displayed by mankind in general, it reaches its acmé or climax.

As at the lowest point in the exhibition of enmity to God, then, stands Adam's transgression, so also at the lowest point of retribution stands the punishment inflicted on him, or God's exhibition of enmity* to him in return.†

* God's *apparent* enmity is *real* love. Rather, God's enmity to human nature, drawn out by man's enmity to him, is his appointed means of displaying love to man himself, by making him through the destruction of his human nature a partaker of the divine nature. Rather, the enmity or opposition of God to man is the enmity or opposition of *love* to *hate*.

† Unquestionably in transgression conscience was by Adam violated, and therefore punishment was by him deserved: for conscience regarded as the *capacity* of understanding moral obligations, or regarded *subjectively* as the schoolmen speak, being essential to the constitution of human nature, was, with every other faculty that belongs to man, possessed from his creation by our progenitor; while conscience in him, regarded *objectively*, was also roused or stimulated into activity by the prohibition which God saw meet to impose upon him, and the threatening with which that prohibition was accompanied. Guilt thus could be, and actually was by him incurred. And that conscience thereupon proceeded to the discharge of one of her most important functions, that of condemnation, is manifest from Gen. iii. 7, 8. Adam's guilt, and the

Adam by his one transgression forfeited creature life, and the enjoyment of the earthly paradise as connected with that life. Nothing more, and nothing less. For proof of my assertion, I again refer to the divine record. *In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die*, Gen. ii. 17, was the menace. *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return*, Gen. iii. 19, was, in the strictest accordancy with what had gone before, the sentence actually pronounced. Conformably to this, Adam went down to the dust; Gen. v. 5; and conformably to this, his descendants, as naturally one with him, in every succeeding age have gone, at present go, and to the end of time will continue to go down to the dust likewise. Rom. v. 12. 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22. There is no such thing implied in the punishment which Adam incurred as spiritual and eternal death. The word of God, our only authority on such matters, says nothing about the first transgression having deserved or having been visited with more than the loss of this present life. And any higher death which is inflicted by God on man is shewn otherwise and afterwards to have been the punishment, not of Adam's guilt, but of greater criminality perpetrated by certain of his descendants. Gradation in guilt stands connected with gradation in punishment; but Adam's guilt takes its place at the bottom of the scale. Therefore enmity to God of a far more atrocious character than that of our first parents behoved to be displayed, before human nature could be subjected to a severer penalty than that which they themselves incurred. In so far as Adam is concerned, so

justice of Adam's punishment, are therefore undeniable. All that I am contending for is, that conscience was in him, previous to the fall, enlightened in the lowest degree, as compared with its illumination in the experiments subsequently made upon it; and, consequently, that the guilt which he incurred, as compared with the guilt of Jews, and with that of persons living since the apostolic æra, necessarily occupies the lowest point in the scale.

strictly was the punishment incurred by him merely the forfeiture of this present life, without any thing farther or beyond, that this forfeiture being exacted from him and others through his and their undergoing the stroke of death, God could without any violation of his truth bestow upon him, and can without any violation of it bestow upon many of his posterity the spiritual and heavenly blessings of his kingdom—a thing which, had more than the loss of this life been the import of the original threatening, would, consistently with the harmony of the divine attributes, have been morally impossible. That human nature besides dying deserves to be excluded from the kingdom of heaven, and that having died it deserves never to exist as human nature again, or that the punishment of man at God's hands extends farther and deeper than the mere forfeiture of this life, is true; but then the additional penalties to which man is subjected fall to be traced to other causes than Adam's one transgression. Adam's punishment, like the guilt of which it is the result, stands lowest or at the bottom of the scale; consisting in forfeiture of the life and happiness which had been originally bestowed on him, and nothing more. A punishment, by the way, which although shared with him by his posterity, is nevertheless *in one sense* peculiar or confined to himself. We never personally had natural life given to us, to be retained or lost by us at our own pleasure: our situation being that of creatures who come into the world under sentence of condemnation, or with a life which, so far from being merely liable to be forfeited, is already forfeited. Accordingly, it cannot be said with truth of us that personally we incur the forfeiture of this present state of existence, or that this forfeiture, as a punishment, is inflicted on us for any personal offence of ours. To Adam alone was natural life given conditionally, or with the alternative of retaining it should he abstain from transgressing, and of losing it should he transgress; and by him alone personally.

therefore, could the forfeiture of the life thus conditionally bestowed have been incurred. But one with Adam we are, for in him we were when he transgressed. As one with him, therefore, we both incurred his guilt and rendered ourselves obnoxious to his punishment: a guilt the lowest which man could incur, a punishment the lowest which God could inflict.

SECTION FIFTH.

ADDITIONAL REMARKS.

The experiment made by God on man, with a view to ascertain for *our* information and satisfaction not for *his*, whether human nature even pure and innocent, when exposed to trial, could abstain from the breach of a divine law of prohibition, was thus complete. Man even in his best natural estate had been weighed in the balance, and had been found to be altogether wanting. Transgression of a law of prohibition, imposed in its gentlest and mildest form, had been the means of bringing to light his natural and essential enmity to God. Such was the first experiment, and such its result. This, however, was a mode of practically investigating the subject which neither could be repeated, nor required to be repeated.

It could not be repeated: for human innocence once forfeited by transgression could never afterwards by any possibility be restored. Man it was thus clearly out of the question to replace in exactly the same circumstances as those in which he had been previous to the entrance of sin; and without this, he could not again have become the subject of an experiment in all respects the same as that by which he had been originally tried.

The experiment did not require to be repeated: for in itself, and in every circumstance connected with it, it was perfect.

Man had been placed in an external and earthly situation the most favourable ; had been influenced by the most powerful of all earthly motives to abstain from transgression ; and had been instigated by the slightest and slenderest of all conceivable temptations to transgress. Under what circumstances better calculated to manifest what pure human nature was could the experiment have been made ? What earthly inducements to abstain from transgression could God have employed stronger than the strongest ? What temptation to transgress weaker than the weakest ? And with the strongest motives of a soulical kind to avoid evil, and the weakest of temptations to commit it was Adam plied. The state of things in paradise was therefore the very best conceivable and possible to accomplish the end aimed at, the discovery of what human nature is. To repeat the experiment, then, was superfluous ; because as the most favourable circumstances for making it had been employed, it only remained that if repeated the experiment must have taken place under *the same* or *less* favourable circumstances. If the former, there would have been no addition made to our knowledge ; and the latter was decidedly out of the question, seeing that from an experiment made under *less*, we could never have derived the conviction which we do from one made in *the most* favourable circumstances, and seeing that to have had recourse to a *less* efficient mode of proving the subject, when *the most* efficient had already been adopted, would have been unworthy of the divine wisdom. It is in vain to say that spiritual and heavenly motives, brought to bear on Adam's mind, might have prevented his transgression : for this is wide from the purpose. God's object in making the experiment on Adam was, not to shew what spiritual and heavenly motives can do, for this he evinced afterwards in the case of his own Son, Matt. iv. 1 — 11, but to shew what the strongest soulical and earthly motives cannot do.

Such being the case, the introduction of the slightest spiritual motive would have interfered with and marred the experiment. To manifest what soul or human mind as possessed by the creature, and as influenced by *soulical* motives only, was incapable of effecting, Gen. iii. 6, and this in subserviency to a future counter manifestation of what soul or human mind as assumed by the Creator, and as influenced by *spiritual* motives, could effect, Matt. iv. 1—11, Rom. viii. 3, was every part of Adam's creation state and circumstances arranged. And so arranged, that the result was perfectly conclusive. Soul or human mind, even when existing pure and innocent in the creature, it was thereby proved could not if tempted, however slight the temptation might be, by any human or soulical motives be deterred from transgression. Clear it is there was no lack of soulical inducements to enforce, on the part of Adam, abstinence from evil. Every conceivable soulical motive, which, with his then scanty store of information, could be brought to bear upon his pure human mind, conspired to dissuade him from listening to the tempter. Especially was he plied with that strongest and most efficacious of all human motives, the threatening of punishment. Gen. ii. 17. All these, however, availed nothing. Over them all his soulical nature itself achieved a triumph. Soulical motives to abstain from transgression, the only ones which under the circumstances of the case could be employed, it was shewn by the result had no power or efficacy whatever against soul's natural and necessary tendency to transgression. Like the green withes which bound Samson, such motives were snapt asunder in a moment on applying to human mind the slightest temptation. Enmity to God, soul or fleshly mind as existing in the creature was; and enmity to God, as soon as the opportunity was afforded, soul or fleshly mind evinced itself to be. The experiment in question — the first experiment made through the medium of

the law of prohibition upon human nature—was thus in every point of view complete and satisfactory. Why then should it have been repeated?

A word or two as to the trial or temptation itself. The use of this was merely to be the medium of bringing God's experiment upon human nature to bear. Is there an agreement between human nature and divine law? or does man's nature stand opposed to God's law, and thereby to God himself? This was the question which was to be solved, and temptation to transgress was the means employed for its solution. Speaking mathematically:—*Given, human nature free from actual transgression, and a law of prohibition imposed by God on that nature: query, by what means are we to ascertain whether man's freedom from sin be the result of love to God, or merely of accidental circumstances?* By presenting to man thus situated an inducement to violate the prohibition, is of course the answer required. Such, then, was the temptation in Eden. It found human nature and the divine prohibition both existing, but in a state of quiescence. The latter had not yet been brought into a state of conflict or collision with the former. When tempted to transgress, however, or when the prohibition was brought to bear with its full force upon human nature, man required to evince whether he was God's friend or foe: his friend, by abstaining from disobedience; his foe, by disobeying. The latter alternative he adopted. These things being considered, the temptation was clearly not the means of rendering human nature bad, when it had been previously good; or of rendering it hostile to God, when it had been previously friendly to him. It was merely the means of shewing what human nature had all along been; of shewing that all the previous apparent righteousness of human nature had been merely negative, or the result of inducements to transgress not having been presented to it, and of enmity to God, although not previously displayed, having

been essential to human nature. It was the touchstone or test of what man is ; the Ithuriel's spear by which he was constrained to assume his proper form and appearance.

Thus have we considered the first grand experiment made by God on the nature of man. A single law of prohibition is imposed on a single human being placed in a state of creature purity and innocence. And to this human being one of the slenderest of all temptations to violate the prohibition is presented. What is the result? Does man triumph over the temptation, and is this first triumph of his preliminary to a succession of others? The reverse. Human nature, unable to withstand temptation, at once falls before it. The suggestion of the creature is by man preferred to the law of the Creator. And thus is there afforded the first grand exhibition of man's deep-seated and essential enmity to God.

Man not having abstained from evil, is of course not exempted from punishment. Expulsion from paradise, and the forfeiture of this present life, result from his one act of transgression.

The being thus sinning is, be it remembered, one with the whole human family. His sin, therefore, is their sin ; and his death, their death. Rom. v. 12. 1 Corinth. xv. 21, 22. Human nature having been summed up in Adam as a whole, the exhibition of what that nature is on his part is an exhibition of what it is on the part of all, and is dealt with accordingly.

Before however the sentence incurred is pronounced and executed, the shadowy and subservient character of Adam and his state is as a matter of encouragement and triumph made known to him. There is held out to him the prospect of the future appearance of another man, descended from himself through the woman and *single* like himself upon whom *substantially* the prohibition violated by himself *shadowily* should be imposed ; Gen. iii. 15 ; and who, when

the fruit of the tree of earthly life was put in his power, should abstain from plucking it. John x. 18. Nay who, instead of aiming at the everlasting perpetuation of his earthly life, as Adam had done when he disobeyed God, Gen. iii. 6, should, in obedience to the divine command, bring his earthly life to a close, that, in exchange for what he thus parted with, he might obtain heavenly life for himself and all at God's right hand for evermore. Psalm xvi. 8—11; Acts ii. 25—28; Phil. ii. 6—11; Heb. xii. 1—2. See also, Gen. iii. 15, and John x. 18. Thus it is interesting to observe, and a beautiful illustration of the loving kindness of God, that Adam's own personal act of disobedience, and its miserable consequences to himself and others, were contrasted with the personal act of obedience of his glorious Son and Lord, and its happy consequences, before the sentence which he had incurred was pronounced, much more executed upon him. Gen. iii. 15—19, v. 5.

Adam's expulsion from Paradise, and, in process of time, loss of life then followed. And with his expulsion, as one consequence of the first grand exhibition of enmity to God on the part of man, terminated the first or miraculous *αιων*, *ævum*, or age of the present world.

SECOND GRAND EXHIBITION OF
HUMAN ENMITY.

DISOBEDIENCE TO THE DIVINE COMMAND.

SECOND GRAND EXHIBITION OF HUMAN ENMITY.

EXPERIMENT MADE ON A PARTICULAR NATION
BY MEANS OF THE DIVINE LAW OF COM-
MAND ; RESULT, EXHIBITION OF ENMITY
IN THE FORM OF DISOBEDIENCE TO THAT
LAW ; PUNISHMENT INFLICTED, EXCLUSION
FROM THE HEAVENLY KINGDOM ; PLACE,
PRINCIPALLY, BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY,
LAND OF PALESTINE ; PERIOD, GENE-
RALLY FROM THE FALL, AND PARTICU-
LARLY FROM THE CALL OF ABRAHAM, TILL
THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM ; STATE
OF THINGS, PARTLY MIRACULOUS, PARTLY
NOT MIRACULOUS.

INTRODUCTORY SECTION.

STATE OF THINGS FROM THE FALL TILL THE DESTRUCTION
OF JERUSALEM GLANCED AT ; PRACTICAL ANTICIPATION
OF HUMAN CAVILS AND OBJECTIONS BY JEHOVAH ; TWO-
FOLD DIVISION OF THE SECOND EXPERIMENT.

Having seen the original Paradisaic state pass away, a new
æra now opens to our view. Man is no longer subjected to a
law of prohibition, for the purpose of ascertaining if he can

preserve the advantages conferred on him at his creation, but to a law of command, for the purpose of ascertaining if he can rise to the possession of advantages that are heavenly and divine. His probation now respects his ability to gain heaven, not his ability to retain earth. And yet, this second experiment is still on a limited scale. Upon a selected portion of the human family only is it made. Not until after the termination of it, and of the second æra with which it stood connected, could mankind in general be rendered the subjects of a last and decisive experiment.

This second age or æra extends from the period of man's expulsion from paradise, to the close of the Old Testament Church and of the lives and ministry of the Apostles. Popularly expressed, it extends to that destruction of the city of Jerusalem which occurred during the reign of the Emperor Vespasian, about A. D. 69.

Considered attentively, this æra is found to consist of several parts or divisions, all, except the last, preliminary and subservient.

We have, for instance, the period from Adam's transgression, till the flood—that from the flood, till the call of Abraham,—that from the call of Abraham, till the issuing of the law from mount Sinai,—that from the issuing of the law, till the taking possession of the land of Canaan,—that from the taking possession of Canaan, till the revolt of the ten Tribes,—that from the revolt mentioned, till the commencement of the Babylonish Captivity,—that from the commencement of the Babylonish Captivity, till the temporary suspension of prophecy after the time of Malachi,—that from the said suspension of prophecy, till the first coming and death of the Messiah,—and that from the first coming and death of the Messiah, till the overthrow of the Old Testament system, when Jerusalem was destroyed. To the last portion of this æra all the rest were, as I have hinted, subservient.

During it alone, were the fleshly descendants of Abraham in a high and exclusive sense subjected to the law of command. Fuller observations on this point I reserve for a more advanced stage of the essay.

Throughout the whole of this second age or æra of the world, we witness the miraculous intermingled with the non-miraculous. God sometimes appears acting directly, or interfering by means of signs and wonders in human affairs; on other occasions, he leaves the train of events to follow its ordinary course. Among the Israelites especially this mixture of the miraculous and the non-miraculous is very remarkable.

Although with a view to present to my readers the subject as a whole, I have been somewhat minute in specifying various successive divisions of the period which ran from the one sin of Adam to the punishment of the one sin of Abraham's descendants according to the flesh, yet in order to avoid swelling unnecessarily the size of this present work, it is not my intention to dwell at any particular length upon its earlier divisions. Indeed, even such of them as respect the Israelites themselves, for the sake of brevity and perspicuity I reduce to two: one embracing the period previous to the Messiah's death and resurrection; and the other, that which was intermediate between these events and the destruction of Jerusalem.

In prosecution of this plan, I remark,

That what took place during the whole of the time which elapsed before the call of Abraham, and the separation of himself and his descendants from the nations of the earth, nay that what occurred in the case of Abraham's descendants themselves before the death and resurrection of Christ, had not for their object, properly speaking, to make the second grand experiment upon man; but to pave the way and prepare for that second grand experiment, the opportunity for making which was to arise through the death and resurrection of Christ and the preaching of the gospel by the Apostles.

True, the second experiment had a reference to Jesus the second man, the Lord from heaven, no less than to men who were of the earth, earthy: having been intended to bring to light what he the Creator could do, as contrasted with what mere creatures had not done and could not do; having been intended to shew that the second man, even although taking hold of human nature loaded with sin and death, could nevertheless raise it to righteousness and immortality, while the first man, even although receiving it pure and innocent, could not help by transgression forfeiting his original privileges, and returning to the dust from which he had been taken; having been intended to shew that the second man, *the quickening spirit*, could by obedience unto death obtain heaven, while the first man, *the living soul*, could not by the slightest abstinence from disobedience retain life and earth.* All this is true: but still as respects mere man himself,—and this is the great subject with which we are at present concerned,—the second experiment had for its object to bring to light his enmity to God; and as this could not in its fulness be accomplished until the period subsequent to Christ's death and resurrection, because not until then could the second law or law of command, the means of making the experiment, be addressed to human beings, therefore every preceding part of the history of man occurred in subserviency to that period, and to that further disclosure of man's nature and character to which it was to give birth.

Let us take a cursory glance at the history of man, and especially of the Israelites, from the fall of Adam downwards, as subservient and preliminary to this second experiment.

God whose wisdom is infinite, and the exhibitions of whose wisdom, the more they are inquired into, prove to us the more instructive as well as astonishing, in the events which

* Romans viii. 3. Philip. ii. 8, 9.

he has caused to be placed upon record in the sacred volume, among other ends aimed at by him, is continually as it were anticipating and practically answering objections, which, by human ingenuity and cavilling, might have been made to his procedure. For instance:—

It might have been alleged “that Adam’s immediate descendants had acquired from him a taint peculiar to themselves, and arising from their close connexion with him. That, over and above, the permission of Cain and his posterity to exist upon earth had been attended with pernicious consequences. That on these grounds, and not on that of any decided enmity to God which is necessarily inherent in human nature, we are to account for the awful wickedness which prevailed in the antediluvian world. And that the sweeping away of these monsters of iniquity would lead to the repeopling of the earth by righteous Noah’s posterity, and thereby to the existence of a race of men of a purer and holier description than formerly.”—Well : the objection is practically met and anticipated. A flood overwhelms all the aborigines of the earth. Noah and his immediate descendants only are preserved from the common destruction.

But, alas! the plague is not stayed. Gratitude for the great deliverance vouchsafed, and dread of future divine vengeance, prove to be equally and thoroughly inefficacious in ameliorating the human heart. Again idolatry and wickedness overspread the face of the globe ; and this, not after the lapse of ages, but in the persons even of the immediate descendants of those who had been witnesses of God’s indignation against evil displayed in the submerging of a world. On what principle can the repetition of the old mischiefs and the recurrence of the old evils be accounted for, except on that of something opposed to God which is common to the nature both of antediluvians and postdiluvians ? “Not at all,” might the same class of objectors have been

ready to say. "Noah's sons and their wives had been tainted by their association, previous to the flood, with men *the imaginations of whose hearts were evil only, and that continually*. Hence, and not from man's native enmity to God, the rapid and painful deterioration visible among their offspring. Let God but take out of the human family a single pair of individuals, righteous and holy—let them be childless when selected by him—let them be separated from all their former connexions—and let their subsequent posterity be constantly under their own eyes, and trained up by themselves alone. Surely in this case righteous and holy children, corresponding in character to their righteous and holy parents, must be the result."—Well: this supposed objection has, like the former, been practically met and anticipated. Abraham and Sarah, the one *the friend of God* and both adorned with the righteousness of faith, are called when rich in religious experience no less than *well stricken in years*, and when as yet they had no child. They are removed far from the scene of their former idolatry, and from all their idolatrous connexions. Years afterwards, Isaac is born. Under Abraham's eye this child of promise is educated; and under Isaac's eye, Jacob. Neither Isaac nor Jacob is permitted to intermarry with females of the land where they sojourned. And what follows?—The posterity of these men, the men upon whom the second grand divine experiment is to be made, have been selected under the most favourable circumstances. The human family, with a view to their after appearance, has once been completely purged by being almost completely destroyed; and a second time, for their sake, has the defecating process been repeated by the external separation of righteous and faithful Abraham and Sarah from former connexions, and from all that could be conceived of as likely to contaminate themselves and their offspring. Such are the preliminary steps taken. And here, then, properly commence

our observations upon that singular people, who occupy the most prominent place in the Old Testament Scriptures ; and in whose case God was to put it to trial, whether a nature which had shewn itself unable to abstain from violating a single divine prohibition, when life along with the state of purity and happiness in which it had been originally bestowed became the necessary forfeit, was able to obey a single divine command, with the certain prospect, in the event of obeying it, of being elevated to the enjoyment of the heavenly glory.

Agreeably to the scheme already proposed, I consider the history of Abraham's descendants according to the flesh as divided into two great periods only : first, that which preceded the advent, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, the Messiah or annointed one ; and secondly, that which followed these events, or the space of about forty years which ran out from the resurrection of Christ till the close of the lives and personal ministry of the Apostles.

During the former of these periods the Israelites were subjected to a variety of divine laws, statutes, and ordinances. The great majority of these were prohibitions directly, and the spirit of the whole of them was prohibitory : it having been only by abstinence from the violation of prohibitions, that exemption from punishment manifested in the continuance to them of the temporal blessings originally conferred on their forefathers could be enjoyed. Only by a breach of the grand prohibition of the Mosaic law, namely, that against rejecting the Messiah when he made his appearance, could this first period be terminated. Deut. xviii. 18, 19. And by crucifying the Lord of glory, in the teeth of the prohibition, was it terminated.

During the latter of these periods were the Israelites subjected to the one law of command exclusively : — *Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ*. To this latter period, the one of

which properly speaking we treat under our present head, was the former entirely subordinate : our sole reason for entering on any consideration of the former period being, that without a due and perspicuous apprehension of it the latter cannot be understood.

Before proceeding farther I deem it necessary, in order to the avoiding of all mistakes, to submit to my readers the two following observations as applicable to Abraham and his descendants during every period of their history, from the call of the former, to the infliction of God's vengeance upon the latter in the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of themselves to the four winds of heaven.

In the first place, the people of Abraham although miraculously chosen, miraculously fostered in the earlier stages of its existence, miraculously preserved from destruction in Egypt, miraculously separated by rites and ceremonies of divine origin from other nations, miraculously guided, miraculously rescued from bondage, and the subjects of innumerable miraculous interpositions from time to time, was nevertheless in a vast number, perhaps in a majority of respects, situated and circumstanced just as the rest of mankind were. The Israelites were left to carry out in a great measure themselves the instructions given them as to religious matters ; they had to till the land for their maintenance ; they had mercantile transactions among themselves and with strangers ; they had a code of civil and criminal laws ; they had judges appointed to administer these ; and they were involved more or less in the broils and political changes of neighbouring and surrounding countries. In all these, and in various other respects, we can detect little or no difference between them and others, between them and us : they acted as ordinary human beings similarly circumstanced would have done, and they were acted on by the ordinary laws which regulate human affairs.

In the second place, although, as shall afterwards be shewn,

the law of faith, or the command to believe, was enforced in a peculiar manner on the descendants of Abraham according to the flesh after the resurrection of Christ, as the only divine law to which at that period they behoved to be subject, yet in a more enlarged sense faith, or the law of command to believe in God, was throughout the whole period of its history the law imposed on the Israelitish community. John xiv. 1. Faith was the law addressed to Abraham their father;* faith was the law addressed to them.† He lived by faith;‡ by faith only could they as just or righteous live likewise.§ Accordingly, the law of faith is not to be regarded as having been imposed on the house of Israel, after the resurrection of Christ, for the first time, but only as having been imposed then directly and exclusively as a law of command, and as the sole law which they were required to obey. Formerly, the law of faith had appeared chiefly prohibiting evil; then it appeared solely commanding good, and good as summed up in the one act of believing in Jesus as the promised Lord and Saviour.

* See Gen. xxii. *throughout*.

† This, independently of every other means of proving it, is evinced by Jehovah's manner of enforcing his statutes and ordinances: *I am the Lord*.

‡ Heb. xi. 8—19.

§ Habakkuk ii. 4; Rom. i. 17; Gal. iii. 11, &c. Faith, indeed, to take a more enlarged view of the subject, was the one law enforced from the fall of Adam till the destruction of Jerusalem; and the obedience of faith, during that period, was the sole means of inheriting spiritual and divine blessings. Heb. xi. *throughout*; xii. 1, 2, &c.

FIRST HEAD.

STATE OF THE FLESHLY DESCENDANTS OF ABRAHAM
PREVIOUS TO THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF
THE MESSIAH.

SECTION FIRST.

EXPERIMENTS MADE UPON THE ISRAELITES IN THE FIRST
PLACE, DURING THE CURRENCY OF THE PERIOD NOW
TREATED OF. THESE NOT GRAND ONES, BUT SUBSER-
VIENT AND SUBSIDIARY. HAD A PROHIBITORY ASPECT.
RESEMBLED THE EXPERIMENT MADE ON ADAM, AND
YET DIFFERED FROM IT.

Let it at once be observed, that this state had a twofold
object:—

First. It was of the nature of an experiment as to whether a
body of human beings placed in very advantageous external
circumstances, and invested with very great external religious
privileges, could retain possession of these.*

Secondly. It was of the nature of an experiment made on
the second man the Lord from heaven, and of an opportunity
afforded to him, not only to do what the first man of the
earth, earthy, had failed in, but infinitely more; not only to
abstain from disobeying prohibitions of the severest and most

* That is, speaking of the state *before* Christ's resurrection: the state *after*
that event was an experiment as to whether, in virtue of Christ himself having
by the obedience of faith obtained internal and heavenly privileges, the Jews
could by the obedience of faith likewise obtain the same privileges.

stringent description, but to yield such a complete obedience to commands, and especially to the great command to sacrifice himself, as should not counterbalance merely but should actually swallow up and annihilate the one transgression of Adam, the multiplied transgressions of the house of Israel, and all the other malignant effects and consequences which have flowed from the entrance of sin into the world.

Without taking into account these two views of the history of Israel, and of the record of that history previous to the death and resurrection of Christ — without perceiving that it was at one and the same time an experiment upon mere men, and subservient to an experiment upon the Son of God in flesh — the Old Testament Scriptures are a perfect chaos. He who, without this key, would attempt to unlock their mysteries, soon finds himself “in wandering mazes lost.” Viewed as the record of an experiment upon the creature, in subordination to an experiment afterwards to be made upon the incarnate Creator, every thing in the Old Testament assumes a systematic form, and thus becomes clear and intelligible.

As to the former of these two views, or regarding the history of the Jews before Christ's appearance as the record of an experiment made by God upon them, in order to ascertain their capacity to abstain from transgression or the display of enmity to himself, and thereby their right to retain possession of the temporal inheritance and other temporal blessings originally conferred on them, the following observations suggest themselves to my mind.

Regarded in this light we have presented to us, to a certain extent, a repetition of the experiment already made in the case of Adam. It is another trial as to whether, by means of abstinence from transgression, an earthly state of peculiar privileges, having God for its author, can be retained by man. God takes Abraham to be his friend, and Abraham's descendants to be to himself a peculiar people. With a view to shew forth

his loving kindness and mighty power in their case he causes them to go down into Egypt, multiplies them there, allows them to be subjected to a most grievous and harassing thralldom, leaves them for a time without the slightest prospect of relief, and then in spite of every difficulty and every impediment, in spite particularly of their own unbelief, hardness of heart and desperate courses, brings them out of the house of bondage *with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm*. He enters into a covenant with them in the wilderness of Sinai, there gives them statutes and ordinances, carries them through their wanderings safely, brings them into Canaan, and having driven out or extirpated its former inhabitants puts them in possession of it. Having done so, he gives them to understand that this land and their other privileges they are to retain conditionally. The grand condition is, their abstaining from disobedience. Harkening to the voice of the Lord, Canaan was to be to them an everlasting possession. Disobeying him, every species of plague, suffering, and loss was to be their portion ; and their disobedience being carried out to its utmost limits, expulsion from the land and deprivation of every privilege which as the earthly church of God they had enjoyed were to be the consequences.*

All this was unquestionably in the main a repetition of the state and case of Adam. Blessings of a temporal nature were conferred, a condition of their continued enjoyment was annexed to them, and violation of the condition was to be attended with loss of the blessings.

The question practically started and practically put to the proof, then, when we view the matter in this light, was, had any alteration for the better passed over the mind of man since the fall? Had the nature which then shewed itself opposed to God been able to repent of its misdoing ; and had love to

* Deut. xxviii. *passim*. See also Matt. xxi. 40—43.

God, to be evinced by abstinence from transgression, become now its predominant principle?

But whatever might be the resemblance between Adam's case, and that of the Israelites as planted in Canaan in terms of the covenant made with them, there subsisted many most important differences between the one case and the other. These we shall first of all attend to.

Difference first.—Evidently in point of numbers. The experiment in paradise was made on a single individual; this, in Canaan, on an entire nation. Therefore transgression of the law or laws of prohibition imposed on Israel required to be a completed national act, before the punishment or punishments threatened could be inflicted.

Difference second.—This respects the degree of knowledge possessed by the parties concerned in these two cases. In Adam's case, as having been necessarily destitute of all the information which is derivable from previous and personal experience, his natural knowledge even amounted to little or nothing. Every communication made to him, as well as every action performed by him, in connexion with the common affairs of life, seems to have been the result of immediate and miraculous divine interposition. And then, as to his religious knowledge; except that he was bound by an express prohibition to abstain from eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, at the risk of forfeiting his life should he disobey, his mind was a perfect blank. Not so situated were the members of the family of Israel. They had all the ordinary experience which human beings in passing from infancy to mature age now acquire, and they had made such progress in the arts as sufficed to render life comfortable. Over and above which, originally from tradition, subsequently from the events which happened to themselves in Egypt, in the wilderness, in Canaan, and in Babylon, and ultimately from the record of the Old Testament Scriptures read in their

synagogues every Sabbath-day, they had such an acquaintance with God and divine things as distinguished them from all other nations on the face of the earth, Rom. ii. 17 — 24, Psalm cxlvii. 19, 20, and as was eminently calculated to influence their minds and conduct. They had actually God himself directing them how to act, as well in many of the occurrences of life and matters of morality, as in those things which more immediately concerned his own service and worship. Greatly, therefore, did the descendants of Abraham surpass pure and innocent Adam in point of knowledge.

Difference third. — Adam and Eve were not *gods* in paradise, nor while they continued in a state of innocence could they have become so. It was only by transgression that they could as human beings attain to that dangerous pre-eminence.* Gen. iii. 5, compared with verses 7 — 11, and 22. On the contrary, the Israelites possessed from their very origin as a nation, and throughout the whole of their history as it is recorded in the Scriptures, the dignity which our common progenitors coveted, Gen. iii. 6, and which to their own disadvantage by sinning they procured. Ibid. 22. The Israelites were gods. *I have said, ye are gods, and all of you are children of the Most High*, was God's own language addressed to them. Psalm lxxxii. 6. The reason of which is assigned by our Lord in John x. 34, 35, when expostulating with the Jews as to the resentment which they displayed on account of his styling himself Son of God. Gods, however, as the rest of the Psalm just quoted from, the eighty second, shews, the Jews were only conditionally to continue. See verses 7, 8. — In being gods, the Israelites it thus appears possessed a privilege, and had acquired a rank, to obtain which had cost Adam his original state of purity and happiness ;

* The reason being that to become *gods*, or *as gods*, the knowledge of good and evil required to be possessed ; and this rank, until the fruit of the forbidden tree had been partaken of, they could not attain to.

and which, although only secured to them conditionally, placed them while it lasted on an eminence far superior to that which the great founder of the human race had occupied.

Thus far, all has been plain sailing. The differences between the state of Adam in paradise and the state of the Jews in Canaan, such as I have explained them, are too obvious to escape the observation of almost any one.

Other differences between the two states of far more importance,—differences not so generally remarked,—now, however, demand our notice. And the more we study and the better we understand these, the more shall we be convinced that while between the case of Adam in paradise and that of the Israelites before Christ came there was, in respect of the prohibitions addressed to both, much that is analogous, there was at the same time nothing like mere repetition.

Adam's case was that of a single human being to whom the destinies of his posterity were so far entrusted that, upon his transgressing and thereby forfeiting his own life, depended the forfeiture of the lives of all who should descend from him.* Abraham's case, on the other hand, was that of a single human being to whom the destinies of his posterity were so far entrusted, that, in the event of his believing and thereby obtaining for himself certain privileges, these privileges were also to be conferred upon his posterity, and to be so secured to them from loss that they could only forfeit them by a single national act of unbelief and disobedience.† The former Adam, lost his life, and all his posterity as one with him lost their lives in him. The latter, Abraham, gained most valuable earthly and temporal privileges, and all his posterity as one with him gained the same privileges in him. Great certainly in this respect is the difference between the fleshly

* Gen. iii. 19. † Gen. xxii. 16—18. Deut. xviii. 18, 19.

head of the whole human race, and the whole human race in him, on the one hand ; and the fleshly head of the nation of Israel, and the nation of Israel in him, on the other. Abraham's act of faith, or act of obedience in offering up his only Son Isaac, constituted the conditional and eventual security of earthly blessings to his fleshly posterity, just as Adam's act of unbelief or act of disobedience involved in sufferings and death his fleshly posterity. In Abraham were his posterity so secured that as a nation they behoved to subsist, and as the church of God to continue, until Abraham's antitype, the Messiah, should make his appearance. True it was, that tribes in the mean time might be broken off from the general body, and captivity long and severe might be undergone by the rest ; but come what would *the sceptre was not to depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh should come.* Gen. xlix. 10. The advent of the true and heavenly Abraham was to be the means of bringing into operation the condition, upon complying with which alone could the descendants of the shadowy and earthly Abraham retain their earthly state and privileges. Only by rejecting the antitypical Abraham, only by putting to death the Shiloh their King, could the typical Abraham's descendants bring their own state and privileges, as the earthly church of God, to an end ; and this in consequence of their compelling the great antitype of their illustrious ancestor to seek his place and kingdom elsewhere than on earth. Recognising him while on earth as their head and monarch, they of necessity would have ratified the faith of Abraham who had rejoiced in the prospect of his day, as well as would have confirmed to themselves their earthly privileges. Driving him heavenwards, on the other hand, by putting him to death, they at the same time and by the same act drove themselves out of their earthly possessions. The continuance of their own earthly state and circumstances

depended on the continuance of the earthly state and circumstances of the Messiah ; and therefore when they deprived him of his earthly life, they by that very act deprived themselves of the continued existence of their own earthly condition. So inseparably connected was the continued earthly life of the one, with the continued earthly existence of the other. Unable to abstain from imbruing their hands in the blood of the Messiah manifest in flesh, they were unable to escape the punishment in flesh which awaited such atrocious guilt.*

Abraham's faith, their security hitherto, could no longer under such circumstances avail for their protection. Their own unbelief, and the faith of the true and heavenly Abraham, both concurred in nullifying the act of their earthly progenitor. The former, exhibited in crucifying the Son of God, was that act which had all along involved forfeiture of the earthly state and privileges which they inherited from Abraham. The latter, exhibited in voluntarily offering up himself a sacrifice without spot unto God, was that higher and antitypical act of obedience of faith on the part of the heavenly Abraham, which swallowed up the inferior and typical act of obedience of faith on the part of the earthly Abraham, with all its earthly effects and consequences.† Still as having secured his

* Earth quaked when Jesus died; Matt. xxvii. 51—53; a fitting emblem of the passing away, in connexion with his death, of that earthly system of things which could be shaken. Heb. xii. 27.

† Compare Gen. xxii. *throughout*, with our Lord's sacrifice of himself. The analogy and also the contrast or opposition are complete. The act of Abraham, and the act of Christ, were both of the nature of offerings of an only son, presented in faith; but the offering of the one was that of a creature, the offering of the other, that of the Creator. The offering of the one was merely *intentional*, the will having been accepted for the deed; Gen. xxii. 10—12; Heb. xi. 17—19: the offering of the other was *actual*. Luke xxiii. 46. The offering of the one established the righteousness of faith in connexion with earthly blessings; the offering of the other was the establishment of a righteousness of faith which is heavenly and eternal. In a word, the one was *shadow* and the other *substance*, the former having been merely the type or

earthly posterity in the possession of their earthly privileges, until the coming and death of his Son and antitype, the Messiah; and as having afforded them an opportunity of becoming ecclesiastically and nationally exempt from punishment, had they been able ecclesiastically and nationally to abstain from disobedience to God, by having been able to abstain from putting the Messiah to death; Abraham's act of faith, recorded Gen. xxii. 10, in its nature and consequences differs widely from Adam's act of unbelief, recorded Gen. iii. 6. The former was the means of bringing his natural posterity into a state of probation, or afforded them an opportunity of escaping punishment, *if they would*; the latter involved his natural posterity at once and irremediably in the same punishment which he himself by transgression had incurred, *whether they would or not*.

Another difference between Adam's case and that of the nation of Israel, which on reflection suggests itself to us, is that the Jews were put upon their preliminary state of trial by being subjected to laws of a prohibitory kind, not as Adam was apparently with reference to himself alone, but in evident subservience to Christ and in a certain sense under the protection of Christ. What I mean is, as I proceed to shew at some length under the next head, that, properly speaking, the prohibitions of the Mosaic law were addressed, not to the people of Israel, but to the Messiah himself, emphatically the Israelite or Jew, in whom that people was summed up and in the hands of whom as *Mediator the whole law was ordained*. Galat. iii. 19. And that in as far as these prohibitions fall to be regarded as addressed to the Israelites or Jews themselves, breaches of them on their part were capable of being atoned for typically by certain prescribed sacrifices, and were all at

figure of the latter; and consequently, upon a very obvious principle, the *shadow* is swallowed up in the *substance*, when, shining in its meridian splendour, divine light is brought to bear upon it.

last actually atoned for and taken away by the one antitypical sacrifice of the Great High Priest himself. Heb. ix. throughout. Not only was Jesus *the end of the law for righteousness*, Rom. x. 4, or did that law address its claims properly to him and not to mere creatures, but in so far as mere creatures can be regarded as having been the subjects of the Mosaic law before the death of Jesus, Jesus himself was their shield and protector from the effects otherwise consequent on transgressing it. Psalm lxxxiv. 9. Upon him all the sins and iniquities of the chosen people were laid. Isaiah liii. 4—6. By him, through his death, they were taken away. 1 Peter ii. 24. Heb. ix. 26. The gospel message to them as a nation was that from all their previous misdoings, from every violation of Moses' law, however aggravated and atrocious, they were by the blood of Christ justified. Acts iii. 19, 26. Ibid. xiii. 38, 39. No doubt, in a certain sense, upon Jesus as the true and heavenly Adam was the prohibition, addressed in appearance exclusively to the earthly Adam, actually imposed. Rom. v. 14. And by him, as having abstained from the breach of it as well as from the breach of every other prohibition, John xiv. 30, Heb. iv. 15, Ibid. vii. 26, was the guilt incurred by the first Adam himself, and by us in him, swallowed up. John i. 29. In all this, a resemblance between the case of Adam and that of the Jews as they were situated previous to the death of the Messiah, is strikingly manifest. To the future Messiah, in both cases, was every thing subservient. Difference, however, also makes its appearance; and it is to the difference that attention is now solicited. In Adam's case, the reference to the Messiah was *indirect*, while in that of the Jews it was *direct* and *pointed*. This becomes manifest when it is observed that, in the case of Adam previous to the fall, no allusion whatever was made to the future deliverer on occasion of the original prohibition being issued, Gen. ii. 16, 17, and that thus no prospect of deliverance from

guilt and its consequences, in the event of guilt being contracted, was in that primeval divine law held out; whereas a reference to the future advent of the Messiah, and to his delivering from sin and death, was implied in every law addressed to the Israelites, and constituted especially the scope and import of all their sacrifices. Psalm xl. 6—8. li. 16, 17. Heb. x. 1—18. Rev. xix. 10. Surely this difference is obvious, and scarcely requires to be insisted on. To himself alone did the prohibition addressed to Adam, while in paradise, apparently refer; to Christ, on the other hand, did every prohibition of the Mosaic law carry on the very face of it a strict and immediate reference. Under such circumstances the Israelites were, by means of every institution of their polity and religious worship, reminded of the Messiah as their present shield and future deliverer, and were thereby, as well as by express prophecies of his future appearance and triumphs, prompted to rely on him as the being who, whatever might be the number and magnitude of their offences, would ultimately sweep them all away. Micah vii. 18, 19. *Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.* Isaiah i. 18. A prohibition such as that issued to Adam, the violation of which, in so far as the language of the law itself is concerned, afforded no hope whatever of salvation, certainly differed materially from prohibitions such as those of the Mosaic law, the violation of which was typically by means of sacrifices of atonement, of sin offerings and trespass offerings, represented as destined by means of the true and antitypical atoning sacrifice to be washed away and blotted out completely and for ever.

Absolutely necessary is it, in order to the obviating of all mistakes, that I here point out a most remarkable difference between the party subjected to the divine prohibition against crucifying the Messiah, and not only the party subjected to the original divine law of prohibition, but also the parties

to whom was addressed the second divine law or law of command. — Adam, an individual, was forbidden to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Individuals of the Jews first, and afterwards of the Gentiles, had the command to believe on Jesus as the Messiah addressed to them. Therefore, in the case of both Adam and the Jews and Gentiles of the apostolic period, the prohibition and the command were alike individual and personal. Not so, however, the prohibition against crucifying the Messiah: it was strictly and properly a national prohibition. Unviolated, there would have been enjoyed by the Jews a national blessing; violated, it entailed on them a national curse. That is, if the prohibition had not been violated, if the crime of putting the Lord Jesus to death had not been perpetrated, the Jews in their national or corporate capacity would have continued to exist and to enjoy their divinely bestowed privileges. By the terms of the supposition, the Messiah would have continued to live upon earth in his flesh and blood nature, the head and ruler of his earthly and fleshly church. And by the terms of the same supposition, the church in its earthly form and capacity would have continued to exist along with him. The continuance of the Jewish people, however, as God's church, and as the subjects of his blessings, would in that case have been national and corporate, not individual and personal. Involved as human beings in Adam's one transgression and its consequences, the individual members of the Jewish church would have continued dying off and passing away in their successive generations just as formerly; the threescore and ten or fourscore years would, as in the times of Moses and David, have continued the ordinary boundary of their personal existence. See the ninetieth Psalm. Therefore, the Messiah continuing to live in flesh could only have existed in connexion with the Jews as a church, nation, or body corporate con-

tinuing to live in flesh ; Deut. xxviii. 1—14 ; not permanently with the individuals of whom at any given period that church might be composed, seeing that death through Adam's one offence would continue overtaking them, generation after generation, without fail and without remedy. You will tell me, perhaps, that such a state of things was impossible ; that as certainly as Adam's sin and death were matters of divine pre-appointment, and therefore could not but take place, so certainly was the crucifying of the Son of God on the part of the Jews matter of divine pre-appointment, and therefore could not but take place likewise. I grant it. I know that as an act of obedience to the commandment which he had received of the Father, it behoved our Lord to sacrifice himself, John x. 18, Phil. ii. 8, 9, no less than it behoved the Jews, as God's creatures and the instruments of accomplishing his purposes, to put that glorious personage to death. Acts ii. 23. All that I want to bring under the notice of my readers is, who was the party required to abstain from violating the prohibition in question, and what would have been the actual advantages derivable from abstaining. The Jews, as a church and nation, and not as individuals, constituted the party to whom the prohibition was issued ; and abstinence from guilt on their part, could it have taken place, being merely negative, would have been attended with exemption from punishment, a benefit merely negative likewise. Abstaining from a national sin, they would have been exempted from a national punishment. Abstinance from eating of the forbidden fruit would have been followed on Adam's part with the continuance of creature life, and continued abode in paradise ; nothing more. Abstinance from crucifying Jesus would have been followed by Abraham's fleshly descendants continuing the church of God upon earth ; nothing more. Matt. xxiii. 37, 38. But neither event could happen : both Adam personally, and the

Jews nationally and corporately, behoved to transgress. And the transgression of the Jews in crucifying the Lord of glory, having destroyed their national and corporate capacity as the church of God upon earth, the way was opened up for the address to them and to others, individually and personally, of the second law or law of command.

SECTION SECOND.

THE TRANSGRESSIONS OF ISRAEL. NECESSARY CONNEXION BETWEEN THE CONTINUANCE OF THE EARTHLY CHURCH OF GOD, AND THE CONTINUANCE OF THE EARTHLY LIFE OF THE MESSIAH. CRUCIFIXION OF THE MESSIAH NOT ONLY AN EXHIBITION OF ENMITY TO GOD, BUT THE DESTRUCTION OF THEIR OWN EARTHLY CHURCH STATE ON THE PART OF THE JEWS. THIS INDISPENSABLE TO THE MAKING OF THAT SECOND GRAND EXPERIMENT UPON HUMAN NATURE WHICH CONSISTED IN ISSUING TO MERE MEN THE DIVINE LAW OF COMMAND.

Whatever resemblances, then, there may exist between the case of Adam and that of the Jews before the appearance and death of the Messiah, especially in that both were subjected to laws having a prohibitory aspect and character, in order to a due and exact appreciation of the two cases, the differences just adverted to, and others of the same kind, must be taken into account.

To the point from which the immediately preceding observations led us to deviate we now return.

Previously to the advent and death of Christ, God was making upon the fleshly church of Israel a series of experiments, the whole terminating in one great experiment. The former had a reference to their conduct before the coming of the Messiah; the latter, to the treatment which the Messiah

himself, when he appeared, was to meet with at their hands. Neither of these, however, did of themselves constitute God's ultimate experiments upon the Jews ; but were subservient to an experiment of a totally different and much higher description, which it was impossible to have recourse to until after the death and resurrection of the Messiah had taken place. The highest experiment made with reference to the Messiah while in flesh, was in subordination to a still higher experiment to be made after his exaltation to heaven.

The experiments made before the one last adverted to, that is, before the one which succeeded the death and resurrection of Christ, are, be it observed, those with which under this present head we have to do. They all had for their object to ascertain the ability or inability of Israel, when tempted to transgress, to resist and overcome temptation. They all had for their object to ascertain whether that highly favoured people could abstain from evil, and thereby enjoy exemption from punishment. Were the minds of the fleshly descendants of Abraham, like the mind of Adam, enmity against God ; or, had a change for the better passed over fleshly mind since Adam's one transgression ? This was the question which was practically to be solved : and the result was a melancholy one. Every experiment made before the Messiah appeared, and above all the experiment made by means of the Messiah's actual appearance, turned out, as might have been anticipated, to Israel's disadvantage and disgrace.

In the wilderness the children of Israel were continually transgressing, and therefore were continually smarting under punishment. Psalm lxxviii. throughout. Especially having at Kadesh, in Paran, murmured and rebelled against the Lord, the existing generation of adults was, as an act of righteous retribution on God's part, prevented entering into the land of Canaan. Numbers xiv. 1—25.

After their introduction into the promised land they were

continually sinning, both under the judges and under the kings. Hence, constant deprivations of their liberty, by the Philistines and other neighbouring and surrounding nations, as well as constant inflictions of judgments of other kinds. See Joshua, Judges, and the two books of Samuel.

Ten tribes having revolted from the house of David, forsaken the worship of the living and true God, and given themselves over to moral abominations and idolatry, were, in a way of punishment, removed by idolatrous nations from the land of their inheritance, and were never afterwards permitted to repossess it. 2 Kings xvii. and xviii.

The remaining two tribes, having provoked the Lord to anger by their transgressions, were, as the effect of the divine vengeance, carried away captive to Babylon, and were not restored until after the lapse of seventy years. 2 Chronicles xxxvi. and the books of Esra and Nehemiah.

During the period which intervened between the return from the Babylonish captivity and the advent of the Messiah, frequent aberrations from the path of duty on the part of the Jews were punished, by repeatedly subjecting them to a foreign yoke, and by other judgments.

In the whole of these cases, Israel shewed itself to be totally unable to abstain from evil. Enmity to God, in the shape of transgressing his various prohibitions, characterises every step which by that people was taken. So complete and so wide-spread, indeed, was the moral malady under which Israel laboured, as far back even as the days of Isaiah, that the Holy Ghost, speaking by that prophet, complains of the whole body politic as being one mass of corruption. *The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint: from the sole of the foot, even unto the head, there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores.* Isaiah i. 5, 6. Succeeding ages shewed that the disease was inveterate. Even amputation of entire tribes, it appeared,

could not cure it. Nothing but the cutting off of the whole remained.

Matters being thus situated, the Son of God made his appearance. The grand, the crowning experiment, as to the power and right of Israel to retain its situation and character as the fleshly church of God, was now about to take place. *Surely*, as if God had said, *they will reverence my Son*. Matt. xxi. 37. Had they done so, the fleshly church would have been permanently established. At all events, it would have escaped the punishment which otherwise impended over it. Such a result, however, was not more competent to the nature of man than it was consistent with the purpose of God.

Upon this experiment, as the most important of all those which before Christ's resurrection could be made, as, indeed, the only one which by its result could open up the way for the introduction of a new age or æra, and for the making of God's ulterior experiments on man, it may be proper to dwell.

Before Christ appeared and died, *thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour, thou shalt not covet*, and in general *thou shalt not refuse to hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God*, and if thou transgressest these or any of these prohibitions, thou shalt in one form or another incur the punishment of forfeiture or loss, Deut. xxviii. 15—68, is the language, and is expressive of the spirit of the laws addressed by God to his chosen people. All, all was prohibitory; and all, in the event of transgression taking place, breathed threatenings of the forfeiture of temporal blessings already enjoyed. Enmity to God was thus, throughout the whole of the period in question, displayed on the part of man, in the form of violating divine prohibitions. Rom. v. 20. vii. 7.

The practical question raised by the advent of the Son of God in flesh was, can Israel according to the flesh continue any longer to be the church and favourite people of God? or is the cup of its iniquity so full, and its enmity to God so complete, that its state and privileges as the fleshly church of God must terminate, and be succeeded and superseded by a church and state of things which are spiritual and heavenly?

Acknowledgment of Jesus as the Messiah, and submission to him in that capacity when he appeared in flesh, would have conferred perpetuity upon the earthly institutions and privileges of Abraham's fleshly descendants. They could not have been raised thereby in the scale of creation, or to the enjoyment of heavenly privileges; it being impossible for abstinence from evil to ensure more than exemption from punishment: but as a nation they would have continued as they were. Just as Adam's abstinence from violating the one prohibition would have ensured to him exemption from the loss of life, so would the abstinence of the Jews from evil manifested in their recognition of and obedience to Jesus as the Messiah, have ensured them exemption from the forfeiture of their privileges as the earthly church of God. Strong, irresistibly strong, were the tendencies of the flesh and blood mind of Jesus as THE JEW that this consummation might take place, even although, had it happened, it would have deprived him of the blessings of the heavenly kingdom.* *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.* Matt xxiii. 37. Such feelings he had, as clothed with pure and

* Strikingly evincing that perfect self-denial, in every point of view, which characterised the Son of God while in flesh. See Rom. xv. 1—3.

holy flesh ; although as Son of God, and as knowing the events which were actually to take place, he longed ardently for the participation with his heavenly Father of *the glory which he had had with him before the world was*. John xvii. 5. See also Ps. lxiii. 1, 2 ; and Heb. xii. 1, 2.

Then comes the other alternative. Repudiation of Jesus and his claims on the part of the Jews, followed up by putting him to death, was necessarily, no less than as matter of punishment, to be attended with the death of all their own fleshly hopes and possessions. For Jesus, once dead, behoved to rise again ; and he could not rise again in the same state and circumstances in which he died. He died loaded with sins,* 1 Peter ii. 24 ; he was to rise freed from sin, which he was to put away by the sacrifice of himself. Heb. ix. 26. He died, because subject to death ; Rom. vi. 10 ; he was to rise, having subjected death to himself and swallowed it up in victory. Rom. vi. 9. 1 Cor. xv. 25, 27, 28, 54. 2 Cor. v. 4. He died clothed with a flesh and blood nature, and an inhabitant of this earth ; John i. 14, Rom. viii. 3 ; he was to rise clothed with a glorified nature, and an inhabitant of heaven. Rom. i. 3, 4. Acts xiii. 32—37. He died subject to law ; Gal. iv. 4 ; he was to rise again the fulfiller of law, or rather the swallower up of law in love. Rom. x. 4. John xix. 30. And he died, as well as was destined to rise again, inseparably connected with his church. Therefore, if when he died it was in his fleshly form, and with his church connected with him in that fleshly form, when he rose again it was to be in his heavenly form, and with his church connected with him in that heavenly form. The principle of this having been, that the church behoved to be conformed to her head : conformed to him in flesh, in anticipation of his manifestation in flesh ; conformed to him in spirit, in consequence of

* Sins not his own. Isaiah liii. 4—6. Heb. iv. 15.

his resurrection in spirit. Thus, in putting Jesus to death, as he died with the certainty of rising again, and as he rose not to a life like the present but to the power of an endless life, the Jews, as a matter of necessity, brought their own earthly and fleshly state, as the church, in his death to an end. Hitherto they had constituted the church of God upon earth; but as the state of the church behoved to be conformed to the state of the church's head and as the head of the church, driven from earth, was thenceforward to exist and reign in heaven, it followed of necessity that the church's head having become heavenly, there was no possibility of the state of the church continuing earthly. If the Jews, then, having rejected Christ and crucified him, were to continue the church of God still, it must be by their abandoning their previous earthly state, and by rising to that same heavenly state to which, through putting him to death and through his subsequent resurrection, they had been the means of constraining the Son of God himself to rise.

Thus was the destruction of their own state and privileges, as the earthly church of God, involved in the crucifixion of the Messiah by the Jews. Putting him to death, his resurrection to a heavenly state necessarily followed; and of that resurrection, a church conformed to his heavenly state, superseding and destroying the earthly one, was necessarily the result. But this is not all. The destruction of their earthly church state was to the Jews not more matter of necessity, than it was of punishment. It was the due and appropriate recompense of their misdeeds. In the fact of their *taking* the Lord's Anointed One, *and by wicked hands crucifying and slaying him*, the Jews were unquestionably the instruments of carrying into effect *the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God*, Acts ii. 23, 24, which aimed at and could only be satisfied by our Lord's death and resurrection; but in this fact, likewise, they were evincing such deadly enmity to God,

as justly exposed them to most awful effects of the divine vengeance. The continuance of their privilege of being the external church of God, had been made to depend on their reception and treatment of the Messiah : murdering him, that privilege became thenceforward impossible, because thenceforward forfeited.

Such, then, was actually the result of this decisive experiment. The Jews had been enjoined to abstain from rejecting and putting to death the long-promised Saviour, and had been forewarned that if they ventured to act in the teeth of this prohibition, they should incur the loss of Canaan and of all their earthly privileges. Enmity to God, however, is essential to the human mind ; and this enmity, as soon as the suitable opportunity was afforded, the Jews could not help displaying. They *crucified the Lord of glory*. 1 Cor. ii. 8. This doing, their right to constitute the church of God upon earth came to an end. Unable to abstain from such an act of atrocity, they were unable to claim exemption from the punishment which had been previously denounced against it as its due. Putting Jesus to death, Sampson like they drew down the edifice of Judaism on their own heads and buried themselves in the ruins.

Understand, however, what it is exactly that I do say. Not that the Jews, in crucifying Jesus, perpetrated the most atrocious of all the acts of which as a nation they were capable, or that for so doing they incurred the heaviest punishment to which as a nation they could be subjected. By no means. For rejecting Jesus glorified, was both a greater crime and visited with a severer punishment.* What I say is, that the Jews, in putting the Messiah to death, committed the highest crime of which they were capable while their right to earthly privileges and blessings continued ; and

* Matt. xii. 31, 32. Compare with Heb. ii. 1—4.

that they incurred, by so doing, the highest punishment to which under such circumstances they were obnoxious, namely, the forfeiture of these earthly privileges and blessings. Crucifying Jesus, no longer could they continue the church of God as a nation of this world. This, and this only, was the appropriate penalty of that particular act of guilt.

Behold here, in wondrous combination, the severity and the goodness of God! As through Adam's one transgression and its punishment there was, unintentionally on his part, opened up to him the prospect of that future Conqueror who was to bruise the serpent's head, so was there through the transgression of the Jews and its punishment, unintentionally on their part opened up to them the prospect of exchanging their earthly and temporary state of churchship, for one that was heavenly and eternal. The consideration of this, however, belongs properly to the next head.

Looking back at what I have stated, it must now I should think be apparent even to the most careless and unreflecting, that although experiments were being made upon mankind in general, and upon the nation of Israel in particular, from the transgression of Adam till the death of Christ, these experiments, in so far as the mere creature was concerned, having all been characterised by their having had for their one object to give man diversified opportunities of manifesting his deep rooted enmity to God; yet all the while human beings were subjected, properly speaking, to no new experiment or class of experiments. All God's trials of man during the long period in question, as has been again and again remarked, had for their sole purpose to ascertain his capability or incapability of abstaining from transgression, and consequently his capability or incapability of being exempted from punishment. They did not put to the test his ability to obey commands, and thereby to earn heavenly rewards. The question which they aimed at solving was,

can man abstain from what is evil? not, can he perform what is good? Every instance of man's disobedience to divine law, then, up to the death of Christ, indeed the act itself of putting Christ to death, was of the nature of the violation of a prohibition. Accordingly, all the evils committed by the house of Israel, up to the period of Christ's death, having been merely so many specimens of one kind of man's enmity to God, namely, his inability to refrain from the breach of what is divinely prohibited, all such evils were in a certain sense so many repetitions of the offence originally committed by Adam. And in the strictest accordancy with this, the punishment of loss and nothing more attended Jewish transgressions, just as the punishment of loss and nothing more had attended the transgression of Adam: loss of their earthly state and privileges, and nothing more, having been the punishment inflicted on the Jews for their crucifixion of the Messiah. In putting Christ to death they committed the great sin against the Son of Man, and incurred as its appropriate punishment the forfeiture of their earthly church capacity; but yet with the prospect of forgiveness held out to them, in the event of their becoming by faith members of that heavenly church which the Son of God rose from the dead to set up. It was in rejecting the Son of God glorified, and thereby committing the sin against the Holy Ghost, or in disobeying the divine command to believe on Jesus as the once crucified but risen and triumphant Messiah, that, as we shall afterwards see, they could commit a more aggravated sin and draw down on themselves a more awful punishment. Matt. xii. 31, 32; Luke xii 10; Acts ii. 36; iii. 19—26; xiii. 26—39. Such being the case, the various instances of transgression on the part of the house of Israel, and especially their putting the Messiah to death, recorded in scripture, although unquestionably exhibitions of enmity to God, do not constitute grand, because

none of them, not even the most atrocious, were new and additional exhibitions of that enmity. They were in one sense merely repetitions of what Adam had done, breaches of divine prohibitions; and in another sense, were merely preparatory and subservient to that grand exhibition of enmity to God, disobedience to a positive divine command, which from themselves was so soon to proceed. Without having gone through all the previous steps of violation of God's laws of prohibition, and thereby all the previous steps of punishment; particularly without having violated the prohibition against murdering the Messiah, and thereby having been punished by the deprivation of their secular state and privileges as the church of God; the house of Israel could never have had the opportunity of shewing the awful extent of that enmity to God which had all along rankled in their bosoms, and in due time made its appearance in the shape of disobeying the divine command to believe on Jesus crucified and glorified as the Messiah and Saviour, nor the opportunity of undergoing the greatest of all the punishments to which as a nation they could be subjected, everlasting exclusion from the heavenly kingdom. But important and necessary as all these previous steps of guilt and punishment were, still their importance and necessity consist not in their having been grand exhibitions of man's enmity and God's displeasure themselves,* but altogether in their subserviency to a grand exhibition of both. †

Important in the highest degree is the subject of which I am now speaking. I dread being misunderstood. And yet, unless the minds of my readers have gone along with me, and been enabled to apprehend the exact relationship subsisting

* Which Adam's sin and the punishment which followed were.

† Their own grand sin in rejecting Jesus glorified, and the grand punishment wherewith it was visited in their complete and everlasting exclusion from the heavenly kingdom.

between the Messiah and his earthly church, I almost infallibly shall be so. Shall I be more successful, if I present an abstract of my previous statements in the following terms?

The state of the Jews, previous to the death of the Messiah, was a state of probation. Experiments varied and innumerable were made upon them, with a view to ascertain if they could abstain from evil, all of which having terminated unfavourably, down came upon the guilty appropriate punishments in the way of deprivation or loss. At last, to the greatest of all the experiments which could take place while their right to be the fleshly church of God continued, were they subjected. The long promised Messiah appeared among them in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. Upon their acknowledging or rejecting him as the Christ — upon their submitting to him as their King, or putting him to death as an impostor, — for one or other of these two alternatives behoved to be adopted by them, — depended their continuing to be the church of God, or their forfeiting that privilege. The Old Testament Scriptures had abounded with hints and intimations of the lowly estate in which the Messiah should make his appearance upon earth; Isaiah liii. 1 — 3, Zech. ix. 9, xi. 12, 13; had urged them, nevertheless, to listen to his instructions, and to yield him implicit obedience; Deut. xviii. 18, 19; and had threatened them with the most signal tokens of the divine displeasure, extending even to the deprivation of all those privileges which they most highly valued and in which they gloried, should they disobey. Deut. xxviii. 15 — 68. So instructed, so exhorted, so warned, in the event of their trampling under foot the heavenly mandate it was impossible for them, consistently with the truth of God, to escape the threatened punishment. Therefore it was that having transgressed, judgment overtook them. Unable to abstain from violating the prohibition against taking away the earthly life of the Messiah,

they were unable to avoid the forfeiture of their own earthly state and privileges.

Human statements however, it may be, are still destined to be unsuccessful. We point then to the following condensed account of God's experiments upon the Israelitish nation and their results, as uttered by the lips of our blessed Lord himself.

Hear another parable: There was a certain householder which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country. And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants, more than the first; and they did unto them likewise. And last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. When the Lord, therefore, of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto these husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy these wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. Matt. xxi. 33 — 41.

The result of the experiment made upon the descendants of Abraham according to the flesh, in sending among them the Son of God incarnate, was thus their depriving him of his earthly life, or the highest display of enmity to God which under existing circumstances they were capable of making; and the depriving themselves thereby of their earthly state

and privileges, the highest degree of punishment which under existing circumstances they were capable of undergoing.

So much for this present topic. The death of Jesus, as the Messiah, was virtually the death or ending of the Old Testament or earthly church. If the Jews were thenceforward to continue the church of God, it behoved to be on a totally different, even on a New Testament or heavenly footing.

SECTION THIRD.

EXPERIMENT MADE UPON THE LORD JESUS IN THE SECOND PLACE, AT THE END OF THE PERIOD NOW TREATED OF. OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES PROPERLY LAW TO HIM. FULFILLED BY HIM. CONTRAST BETWEEN VIOLATION OF DIVINE LAWS BY THE ISRAELITES IN GENERAL, AND OBEDIENCE TO DIVINE LAW BY JESUS THE ISRAELITE. DIVINE LAW, IN AS FAR AS PROHIBITORY, CONSUMMATED AND EXHAUSTED IN HIS DEATH.

Proceed we now,

Secondly, to take notice of the other purpose of God in bringing about all the events of man's history subsequent to the fall and previous to the appearance and death of the Messiah, especially those events which concern the nation of Israel; and in causing the details of these events to be put upon record. This was that he might thereby, when the Messiah made his appearance, impose the second law upon him, as the second man, the Lord from heaven. For as we shall see immediately, whatever inferior and subordinate objects the composition and compilation of the Old Testament Scriptures might have, these Scriptures were destined to constitute properly the law addressed by God to Jesus Christ. These scriptures were God's word. And when Jesus came as their object, subject, and fulfiller, the *word was made flesh*.

This imposition of the second law on Jesus Christ the second man, through the instrumentality of the Old Testament Scriptures, was a grand purpose or object on the part of God. In imposing laws of prohibition upon Israel, that is, upon mere creatures, before Christ appeared and died, God's object was merely subordinate: all this having taken place in subserviency to a grand object of God, which was to be fulfilled in his imposing the one law of command upon the Jews subsequently to Christ's resurrection. But what was a subordinate object as regarded the creature, was a principal one as regarded the Creator. If God, in giving the Old Testament Scriptures and all the laws of prohibition contained therein to the Jews, had merely a subordinate purpose in view—to prepare matters for his afterwards having an opportunity of issuing to them the law of command, the grand purpose in so far as they were concerned to which every other purpose was subservient; on the other hand, in giving the Old Testament Scriptures, involving as well laws of command as laws of prohibition, to his own Son, his object was not a subordinate but a principal one—to contrast the complete obedience of the second or heavenly man to divine law, with the breach of that law by the first or earthy man, and to exhibit sin and death, the consequences of the breach of that law by the creature, swallowed up in righteousness and life everlasting, the consequences of the fulfilment of that law by the Creator.

Having treated of this subject already in another work,* and it not being my object exactly in this present Essay to establish the obedience and consequent exhibition of love to God on the part of the Lord Jesus, in contradistinction to the disobedience and consequent exhibition of enmity to God on the part of mere man, I may be excused entering upon a consideration of the topic at the same length which might

* Dialogues on Universal Salvation, and topics connected therewith. Simpkin, Marshall, & Co., London; 1838. (See Dialogue third.)

otherwise have been requisite. For fuller information, a reference is hereby made to the work alluded to.

Still, the obedience of the Messiah to the divine law comes in my way. It was one of the two objects, and the more important of the two, which God had in view in setting up the nation of Israel, in issuing laws from Mount Sinai, and in causing to be committed to writing the books of the Old Testament. Without touching on it, my own theory of divine truth would be incomplete. And, what is of infinitely greater consequence, without possessing some acquaintance with it, the subserviency of the Old Testament dispensation to the New, and the manner in which the Old Testament dispensation was brought to an end, could never be understood. If God's purpose in giving forth Moses' law was, that human beings subjected to it might have an opportunity of shewing their inability to obey it, Rom. v. 20, his purpose also was, that his well beloved Son, manifested in flesh and subjected to it, might have an opportunity of shewing that he was able to obey it. Gal. iv. 4 ; Rom. viii. 3. And before the Old Testament dispensation could pass away, it was necessary that in one and the same event, the death of the Messiah,—an event expressive at once of the creature's disobedience and the Creator's obedience, of the creature's enmity and the Creator's love,—both purposes should receive their accomplishment.

Well, then, if the history of Israel previous to the death of Christ, as well as the record of that history, had for one of its objects to make known the inability of that highly favoured nation to refrain from violating divine prohibitions, and thereby its inability to be exempted from the forfeiture of its earthly state, privileges, and church capacity, it had for another object to afford to the Lord Jesus, as the second Adam and second Abraham, an opportunity of fulfilling divine law thoroughly, John xix. 30, of swallowing it up in himself as the end of it for righteousness, Rom. x. 4, and of

thereby earning for himself, as matter of right, the possession of the heavenly glory. Phil. ii. 8, 9; Heb. xii. 1, 2. Also Psalms xv. and xxiv.

To understand this statement, be it observed,

That God, throughout the volume of inspiration, is contrasting, or setting in opposition the one to the other, two men: the one of the earth, earthy, the other the Lord from heaven. 1 Cor. xv. 47. Gen. ii. 7. Matt. i. 18 — 25.

The former, or earthy man, God creates and places in the most advantageous earthy circumstances; especially, creates him pure and innocent, and, having done so, imposes on him but one law of prohibition, a law involving in it scarcely the shadow of a restraint: Gen. ii. 16, 17: the object of all this, as appears from the result, having been that breach of divine law committed under such circumstances, and in spite of such an accumulation of earthly motives all pointing towards abstinence from it—that transgression taking place even in man's best natural estate—might exhibit, with the greatest prominency and relief, and in the most striking manner, the inability of the mere creature, when assailed by temptation and left to itself, to abstain from evil. Gen. iii. 1 — 6.

The second, or heavenly man, God introduces into the world under the most disadvantageous earthly circumstances: not merely born in a mean condition, and during infancy and youth surrounded by every species of physical discomfort—not merely walking through life in the vale of poverty, obnoxious to human obloquy and scorn, and the constant mark of human malice—but loaded with sins, the sins of others, not his own; Isaiah liii. 4 — 6; 2 Cor. v. 21; Heb. iv. 15; subjected to every conceivable species of divine law, whether prohibitory or imperative, and to the most severe and stringent exactions of that law, whether prescribing external or internal obedience; Gal. iv. 4; Rom. viii. 3; Matt. iii. 15; and

obliged although guiltless to die, that is, obliged—after having obeyed every other requirement of law, and having thereby earned a right to continue on this earth for ever, John x. 18,—in obedience to law, to sacrifice the pure and holy nature by which his preceding obedience had been rendered. Ibid.; Phil. ii. 8. Such were the awfully discouraging, and, to mere flesh and blood, absolutely oppressive and overwhelming circumstances in which he who was the second man, and Son of Man, was ushered into and passed through the world. One object of all this was of course to shew, by way of contrast, that while the mere creature possessed of every earthly advantage had been unable to abstain from transgression, and thereby unable to retain what he naturally had,—the Creator manifest in flesh, on the other hand, without any earthly advantage whatever, nay in spite of every conceivable earthly disadvantage,* was able not merely to abstain from transgression, but also in his own person and by means of his own righteousness to bring transgression to an end, and thereby not, to be sure, to retain his life upon earth, but to deserve and obtain, as the reward of his obedience unto death, life everlasting.

Now in subserviency to this manifestation, obedience, death, and resurrection of the second man, as one of the grand objects or designs of the Almighty, was the nation of Israel selected and set up—was law of every description issued—was law reduced to writing—did the subsequent events of the history of the Jews take place, and were they recorded—were prophecies delivered to that extraordinary people—and was the whole mass of narrative, law, and prophecy collected and digested into one volume. In other words, not so much for the sake of the ordinary Jews them-

* *The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head.* Matt. viii. 20. Contrast this state of things with the abundant natural and creature comforts possessed by the first Adam in paradise.

selves, as for the sake of him who was emphatically THE JEW, did every thing mentioned in the Old Testament Scriptures happen, and was it placed upon record.

These statements being understood, we perceive at a glance why it is that *the testimony of Jesus* is expressly declared by John *to be the spirit of prophecy*. Rev. xix. 10. Various forms the Old Testament writings assume; but under whatever guise they may appear, they are all prophecies concerning the future Messiah. They are declaring beforehand what he should be and do; they are setting forth beforehand the nature and glories of his kingdom. Psalm cxlv., for instance. They speak throughout *of his sufferings, and of the glory that should follow*. 1 Peter i. 11. See also Luke xxiv. 25—27, 44—46. There is not a person, an event, a prophecy contained in the books of the Old Testament, but has in one way or another, directly or indirectly, a reference to Jesus Christ. Even passages the most unlikely and unexpected are found to speak of him.* Under the aspect, to mere fleshly mind, of treating only concerning Adam, Abraham, David, and other Old Testament worthies, they are in reality treating concerning the death and triumphs of him who was Son of Man and Son of God. Apart from the incessant reference which the Old Testament Scriptures have to Christ, as being so many prophecies of him, what correct, consistent and satisfactory meaning is it possible for us to assign to them?

Understanding this, we are prepared to understand still farther that as the Old Testament Scriptures spoke throughout *of Christ*, so likewise did they speak throughout *to Christ*. As every part of their contents was of the nature of prophecy concerning him, so were they from Genesis to Malachi of the nature of laws addressed to and imposed on him. They con-

* Compare Matt. xxvii. 3—10, with Zech. xi. 12, 13; John xix. 36, with Exodus xii. 46, &c. &c.

stitute the record of God's second law, issued to the second man.* And this, whatever form these writings may assume. Whether narratives of the characters and doings of remarkable personages, they were in reality injunctions to him to be and to do anti-typically, what these men had been and had done typically; Rom. v. 14; or rites and ceremonies, such for instance as the rite of sacrifice, they in reality prescribed to him, as the antitype of all these, the sacrifice of himself; Hebrews, x. 7; or prophecies, they, under the appearance of merely foretelling events, were in reality so many directories to him as to the line of conduct which it was incumbent on him to pursue. Matt. xvi. 21. Luke xxiv. 25, 26, 46. The Old Testament Scriptures, in a word, may be fitly represented as the mould into which it behoved the whole mind and procedure, every thought and every action, of the second or heavenly man to be cast;† as the rule or standard to which in every part of his life and conversation he should conform himself.‡ They were the Messiah's law—a law stringent and severe, requiring the most minute and exact obedience, and permitting not the slightest deviation from either the letter or the spirit of its enactments. This law, so different from the mild, may I not rather say the intentionally trifling form, in which divine law had been issued to the first man, it was absolutely necessary that Jesus, the second man, should without the least flaw or mistake fulfil.

If correct in all this—and who that *knows the truth as it is in Jesus* will dispute my positions?—then the following remarkable and interesting fact is obtruded on our notice, namely, that it was only in a subordinate sense and in appearance, that the law of Moses was given to the whole house of

* Luke xxiv. 44—46.

† See this figure employed by the apostle Paul in reference to members of the church, with beautiful effect, in the Greek of Romans vi. 17.

‡ Psalm cxix., which is a detail of the experience of the Messiah while in flesh, frequently alludes to this. Read carefully from verse 89 to verse 118.

Israel : that law having been in its highest sense and in reality given to him who was himself the true Israel, the being who truly wrestled with God and prevailed. Gen. xxxii. 24—29. Gal. iii. 19. We now discover that in reading the commandments issued from Mount Sinai, and all the subsequent ordinances prescribed to and imposed on the members of the Jewish commonwealth, we are reading so many commandments and ordinances which were really and truly prescribed to and imposed on Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God. How important as well as consolatory *the law of commandments, contained in ordinances*, Ephesians ii. 15, when viewed in this light ! Divine law appears no longer given to be broken, but given to be fulfilled. No longer through its violation a means of drawing down on man the divine displeasure, but through its fulfilment a means of elevating him to the enjoyment of heavenly and everlasting happiness. Not merely *holy and just*, but also *good*. Rom. vii. 12. How sweet, how consistent with truth, all this ! The object of God in issuing his law is now seen to have been, to shew that what creatures had proved themselves incompetent to perform, the Creator manifest in flesh was both competent to do and would do : Rom. viii. 3 ; that what creatures had endeavoured to dishonour by their disobedience, should through the obedience of the Creator be *magnified and made honourable* ; Isaiah xlii. 21 ; and that what in every particular had been violated by man, Isaiah i. 4—6, Acts vii. 51—53, Romans v. 20, having been in every jot and tittle fulfilled by the Son of God, should pass away, being swallowed up along with all human transgression in his own perfect, divine, and everlasting righteousness. Matt. v. 17, 18. Rom. x. 4.

Formerly, the selection of God's favoured people, and the number, minuteness, and irksomeness of the ceremonies prescribed to them, were circumstances to us destitute of all meaning. They were so many enigmas which we found our-

selves utterly unable to solve. Revolted, especially, were we at the committal to writing of many of the things recorded in the Books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, they being in themselves absolutely trifling and nonsensical. Now, however, that we understand the thorough reference of the Old Testament Scriptures to Christ, how different are our views and feelings. Through the existence and separation of the children of Israel, and through the various and multiplied laws which were prescribed to them, God, we now see, is directing our attention to his own Son as he in whom that nation was summed up, and to the number, intricacy, and difficulty of the points of obedience which it behoved him as made under the law to attend to and fulfil. All was subservient to the bringing in of him—all was subservient to the manifestation of his righteousness. But for him, Judaism with all its privileges, and all its countless train of rites and ceremonies, would never have existed. But for him, priests and sacrifices, judges, kings, and prophets, the captivity in Egypt, the wandering in the wilderness, and the possession of the land of Canaan would have been unknown. In short, what the one prohibition issued in Paradise was to the first man, Gen. ii. 16, 17, the whole of the Old Testament Scriptures were to the second man. Matt. v. 17, 18. Luke xxiv. 44. To him they constituted law: a law which embraced every variety of prohibition and command—which was imposed with the most rigorous and unrelenting severity—which, not satisfied with regulating the external conduct, reached home likewise to the thoughts and intents of the heart—and which could only be exhausted or brought to an end by means of the sacrifice of the pure and holy nature by which it was destined to be obeyed. Psalm cxix. 96. A law which as addressed to Jesus, the second man, was summed up in these words: “*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and Thou shalt love thy neighbour as*

thysself." Matt. xxii. 37, 39. Such was the law given by God to Jesus Christ. And such is the meaning which the Old Testament Scriptures are found to involve when understood in their true sense, that is, with reference to him who was their Divine fulfiller.

When this is apprehended by us, we are at no loss to apprehend the real state and condition of Abraham's descendants according to the flesh, during the period which elapsed previous to the appearance and death of the Messiah. They were a people in every respect subsidiary and subservient to that glorious personage. True, they might commit sin and incur punishment; because in a certain, although subordinate sense, the law of Moses was obligatory upon them. But in reality, during the whole interval between the giving of the law and the coming of the Messiah, they were under the Messiah's protection, Psalm lxxxiv. 9, as the person to whom the law was properly speaking addressed, and by whom in due time it was to be fulfilled. Their breaches of the law were his: for, although personally sinless, *he was wounded for their transgressions, and bruised for their iniquities.* Isaiah liii. 5. His righteousness was theirs: for, as the true Abraham, and thereby one with them, his fulfilment of law was equivalent to their fulfilment of it. Acts iii. 26; xiii. 38, 39; 2 Cor. v. 21; 1 Peter ii. 24. Every stroke of justice aimed at them, thus passed through them to him, the true victim of divine vengeance; and every blessing promised to obedience redounded back from him, the fulfiller of law, to them as one with him, and as having thereby an interest in his fulfilment of it: *conditionally*, to be sure; that is, the Jews were to realize the blessedness flowing from the Messiah's obedience only if they believed on him. Rom. x. 4. This circumstance, however, properly falls to be noticed under the next head.

The obedience of Jesus to the Old Testament Scriptures, as the law which God imposed on him the second man and

Messiah, having begun with the first dawnings of intelligence in him, Luke ii. 40 — 52, and having been continued throughout the whole period of his earthly career, 1 Peter ii. 22, was perfected in his death. John xix. 30. The demands of divine law had grown as his obedience had grown, until at last that law could be satisfied with nothing short of the sacrifice of himself. And whatever obedience divine law had demanded, he had always and instantly yielded. His life itself he gave the moment that God required it. Dying, to be sure, he contradicted entirely the tendencies of his human nature, or exercised the greatest possible self-denial; Rom. xv. 1 — 3; for his nature as pure and holy having been entitled to continued existence upon earth, necessarily inclined towards that result: Matt. xxvi. 39: dying, however, he offered up himself voluntarily and cheerfully, Ibid. 42, Luke xxiii. 46, a sacrifice without spot unto God, Heb. ix. 14, in obedience to the divine commandment; John x. 18; Phil. ii. 8; not under the influence of any human motive, seeing that the tendencies of human nature were opposite, Matt. xxvi. 39, but under the influence of that divine principle of faith which *is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen*, Heb. xi. 1, a principle of which he himself was at once *the author and the finisher*. Ibid. xii. 1, 2. This serves to bring into view the twofold consequence which is involved in the death of Christ. It took away sin; it brought in everlasting righteousness. It took away sin, by bringing to an end in himself, as one not only with Jews* but with the whole human family,† that human nature to which sin, sin against Adam's law and sin against Moses' law, attached‡—a nature which, by the peculiar circumstances of his birth,§ and by his total abstinence from evil,|| he had previously shewn to be pure, spotless, and holy in himself.¶ And it brought in righteous-

* Matt. i. 1 — 16. † Luke iii. 23 — 38. ‡ John i. 29. § Luke i. 35.

|| Heb. vii. 26.

¶ Heb. ix. 14; 1 Peter ii. 24; 1 John iii. 5.

ness, or was the consummation of obedience: for, up to the period of his death, as law still continued to have demands on him, his obedience, exact and strictly according to God's requirements as it was at every step, was nevertheless not complete;* but in the sacrifice of himself, or of the pure and holy nature which had been subject to law and from which all his previous acts of obedience had proceeded, and this as itself an act of obedience which God required at his hands, the nature which had been subject to law of course ceased to exist—a fact which, as it left no farther act of obedience capable of being performed by that nature, constituted the sacrifice or destruction of it by the Messiah the one act of perfect and everlasting righteousness.†

Thus did the disobedience of the Jews, and the obedience of him who was the Head and King of the Jews, run up into one event, the death of the latter. His death, on their part, was a flagrant violation of God's law; whilst, on his part, it was the fulfilment of God's law.

And, farther, as the consequence of putting the Messiah to death was to the Jews the destruction of their earthly state and privileges, so was the voluntary obedience of the Messiah even unto death rewarded with his being raised from the dead to the heavenly state, and to the everlasting enjoyment of heavenly privileges.

But a new scene is about to open.

* Luke xvii. 10, compare with John x. 18; Phil. ii. 8, &c.

† John xix. 30; Rom. x. 4; Gal. iii. 12, 13.

SECOND HEAD.

STATE OF THE FLESHLY DESCENDANTS OF ABRAHAM
DURING THE PERIOD OF FORTY YEARS SUBSE-
QUENT TO THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF THE
MESSIAH.

SECTION FIRST.

A GENERAL VIEW OF THE SUBJECT.

JESUS, as the Messiah, having died and risen again, we are now presented with a view of the divine procedure towards man totally different from and vastly superior to any which had preceded.

Life and immortality having been brought to light through the gospel, 2 Tim. i. 10, a change of the most wondrous description, *there is made of necessity a change also of the law*. Heb. vii. 12.

Hitherto God had been issuing prohibitions, accompanied with the menace of forfeiture or loss in the event of their being violated. And, acting in the teeth of the last and greatest of these prohibitions, the Jews had put to death their long-promised Messiah, thereby incurring as their punishment the deprivation of their state and privileges as the church and people of God upon earth.

Now God appeared issuing a command, accompanied with the promise of a reward in the event of its being complied with. And, obeying this command, by believing on him whom they had crucified and whom God had raised from the dead, as being indeed the Messiah, the Jews might with

certainly, agreeably to the word and oath of Jehovah, have counted on rising to and becoming the church and people of God in heaven.

That is, God, who had been dealing with the Jews previously in a manner analogous to that in which he had dealt with *the first man of the earth, earthy*, issuing to them prohibitions, and, when these were transgressed, inflicting on them the punishment of loss, was now going to deal with them in a manner analogous to that in which he had dealt with *the second man, the Lord from heaven*, issuing to them a command, and bestowing upon them, in the event of their obeying it, as a reward the possession of life everlasting.

This divine law of command issued first to Jews, and afterwards to Gentiles, was in itself and in the consequences annexed to compliance with it, in so far as mere creatures were concerned, a perfectly new law. And not only new, but a law which set aside and superseded all the previous laws and enactments of Judaism, on account of their having become obsolete, through having received their accomplishment. Heb. viii. 6—13. To it, and to it only, as the sole law imposed by God on man, were Jews and Gentiles for the space of forty years to be subject. In this way was a new and grand experiment to be made by God on man. Enmity to God on the part of man had already manifested itself frequently and strikingly enough; but hitherto in the shape of man's violating divine prohibitions, threatening curses. The question now started and now to be solved, however, was, Does the enmity of man to God extend so far as to disqualify man for yielding obedience to a law of command, promising blessings? If able to obey divine law couched in this other and higher form, then would his opposition to God have been evinced to be only partial. But if unable to obey even it, then would there be exhibited to us a much deeper, a much more awful, and a much more instructive view of his thorough enmity to

God, than all his previous violations of laws of prohibition had been capable of affording.

The law of prohibition to Adam was the first divine law; Gen. ii. 16, 17; the law of command to Jesus Christ was the second divine law. Matt. xxii. 37—39. As laws of prohibition had been addressed to Jews, thereby assimilating their case to that of Adam, so was it proper that a law of command likewise should be addressed to them, thereby assimilating their case to that of Jesus Christ. And, putting out of view for the present both laws of prohibition addressed to the Jews, and the law of command addressed to Jesus Christ, as having been a series of connecting links between Adam and the Jews subsequently to Christ's resurrection, we observe that as the first grand divine experiment was made upon mere man, through the medium of the first divine law, the law of prohibition addressed to Adam, so was no second grand divine experiment made on mere man until God saw meet to address to him, after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the second divine law, the law of command—that law which had been previously imposed on and fulfilled by Christ.

Let it be remembered that the Jews, by crucifying Jesus, had brought themselves into a most anomalous predicament. They had lost earth, and they had acquired no right to heaven; they had forfeited one set of privileges, and they were to be put upon trial as to whether they were capable of entitling themselves to the possession of another. They had destroyed their own previous character and *status* as the earthly or fleshly church of God: the death of Jesus, as we have seen, having been virtually the termination of it. Exaction of the penalty incurred did not it is true immediately take place; but the sentence of destruction to their temple, capital city, and nation—to their priesthood and sacrifices—to their rites, institutions, and privileges—which had gone forth, nevertheless impended over their heads, and behoved in due time

to be executed. The reason of God's temporarily postponing its infliction was, that the objects of it might have space and opportunity to repent; that they might, if they felt inclined to do so, make their escape from the ruins of their earthly church state, by embracing God's offer to them of becoming his heavenly church. Acts iii. 19—26, Rom. ii. 4—11, 1 Thessal. ii. 14—16. Jesus the Messiah they had, as it were, forced up to heaven, by their maltreatment. To heaven they might, if they believed, follow him. Supposing them to have done so, their previous inferior state as the earthly church, lost by their own misconduct, would have been advantageously exchanged by them for a future superior state as the heavenly church. The one or the other of these two alternatives, however, it was indispensable for them to adopt. Either to persevere for a time in their then present course of conduct, practically homologating or approving of the act of murder which they had just committed, by continuing to reject Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah, and by pouring contempt on the message of salvation sent by him glorified to them; or to abandon speedily their then present state of guilt, by recognising Jesus as the Messiah, even at the expense thereby of condemning themselves for the treatment which he had met with at their hands. Acts ii. 23; iii. 13—15; xiii. 27—29. No middle course was left to them. In the state into which they had brought themselves by the crucifixion of the Messiah, it was impossible for them to continue. A period of forty years' probation, corresponding to the period of probation assigned to their forefathers in the wilderness, was vouchsafed to them.* If previous to the close of that period they obeyed the divine command, by believing on Jesus as the Messiah,

* Compare Matt. xvi. 28, with the latter part of Stephen's address, Acts vii. with Heb. iii. 6—19, and with Ibid. x. *towards the end*. As also with Rev. xxii. 20, *Surely I come quickly*.

then were they to be elevated to the rank of God's spiritual and heavenly church, as they had formerly constituted his fleshly and earthly one. If, however, at the close of that period they were found rebellious, adding to the guilt which they had already contracted in crucifying Jesus,* that of rejecting him glorified and his proffered kingdom,† then was punishment in the form of divine judgments the most signal and appalling, and ending in utter destruction, to overtake them. Their guilt in putting Jesus to death, Acts ii. 23, aggravated by their still greater guilt in setting themselves in opposition to him glorified and shedding forth the gifts of the Holy Ghost, Heb. ii. 1—4,‡ was to expose them to the vengeance of the second death. The sentence which they had already incurred, and execution of which had merely been postponed, was now to be carried into effect, in the deprivation of them of all those earthly privileges in which they had formerly gloried; and an additional sentence having been incurred, they were in virtue of it to be excluded, or rather, they were to exclude themselves, Acts xiii. 46, from all the privileges and blessings of the heavenly kingdom.

Briefly expressed, continued resistance on the part of the Jews to the second divine law, the law to believe on Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah, was, in addition to the punishment of loss of their earthly state which they had already incurred by putting Jesus to death, to entail on them the higher and still more awful punishment of everlastingly coming short of and being excluded from the heavenly state.

* The sin against the Son of Man, which might be forgiven.

† The sin against the Holy Ghost, which could not be forgiven. Matt. xii. 31, 32.

‡ Explained by Matt. xii. 31, 32; Mark iii. 28, 29, and Luke xii. 10. Also by 1 John v. 16, 17.

SECTION SECOND.

NO LONGER LAW OF PROHIBITION, BUT LAW OF COMMAND.

THE LATTER, THE SECOND LAW. SIN AGAINST THE SON OF MAN, AND SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST.

Although the preceding remarks may suffice by way of an introduction, they are very far from superseding those more ample details upon which I am about to enter ; indeed, their sole value will be found to consist in preparing the mind for the understanding of what follows.

Christ in his obedience unto death not only manifested his ability to abstain from transgressing every divine prohibition, but also his ability to comply with every divine command ; not only took away the sin of Adam and the sins of the Jews, or the effects of the violation by both of their respective laws of prohibition, but also acquired a right to the enjoyment of life everlasting, upon which he entered by his resurrection from the dead and ascension to his Father's right hand. Sin he took away, by bringing to an end in his death human nature ;* life everlasting he rose to the enjoyment of, by exchanging human nature in his resurrection for and superseding it by the divine nature.†

In this way was an opportunity afforded for making a second and an entirely new experiment upon mere human nature — an experiment to which the previous exhibitions of enmity to God by Adam and the Jews, and, in a qualified sense, the previous exhibition of love to God by Jesus Christ had been subservient.

This was an experiment which, like those that had gone

* The nature from which sin had sprung, and with which sin stood inseparably connected.

† The nature to which righteousness owed its origin, and of which righteousness is the necessary and everlasting characteristic.

before, was still to be conducted through the medium of imposing divine law upon man: but law issued in a form totally different from that in which to mere man it had ever previously been addressed. God, in dealing with the Lord Jesus during the period of his incarnation, had not only forbidden disobedience, but had also exacted obedience on his part; had not only issued to him prohibitions, but also commands. That is, had not only treated him as he had treated Adam and the Jews, but had also treated him in a manner up to that time peculiar to himself. In consequence of this, after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, when his perfect obedience had been rewarded with life everlasting, God appeared no longer treating mere man as he had formerly treated him, but after the peculiar manner in which he had treated his own Son while in flesh; appeared no longer subjecting mere man to prohibitions, but to a command. The novelty of the experiment then made having, indeed, consisted mainly in this, that it took place, not as formerly through prohibiting evil, but through commanding good.

It was also an experiment still to be made upon the Jewish people; but not upon Jews exclusively: for in every case in which the Jews as a body resisted the gospel command and rejected the gospel offer, the apostles were to enforce the claims of this divine law upon Gentiles also. Acts xiii. 44—48. God was, while its members continued in flesh, to reconcile his previously fleshly church to himself, through the medium and power of Christ's death; and this before saving that church, by rendering it heavenly, through the medium and power of Christ's resurrection. Rom. v. 10. The fleshly church thus to be reconciled, was to consist of Abraham's descendants according to the flesh, if they would but obey him. Acts iii. 26; xiii. 5. 14; xiv. 1; xvii. 1—3. And for this purpose the gospel command was first to be proclaimed to

and enforced on them. Luke xxiv. 47; Acts i. 8; ii. 36. But a fleshly church, or rather a church in flesh, it was indispensable that Christ should reconcile. Therefore, in every case in which their message was rejected by Jews, the apostles were instructed unhesitatingly to turn to the Gentiles. Acts xiii. 46, 47; xxviii. 28. Individuals of this latter class, believing on Jesus as the Messiah, were thereby to be enrolled among the number of Abraham's descendants, and to be considered and treated as such. Acts xv. 7—9; Rom. ii. 28, 29; Gal. iii. 27—29. Such believing Gentiles were, along with believing Jews, to constitute the church of God in flesh, and were in that capacity to be reconciled to God. And both believing Jews and Gentiles, persevering in faith till the close of the period of probation allowed to the Jewish people, 1 Thessal. ii. 15, 16, Heb. ii. 6, 14, x. 35—39, were, after having been the church of God upon earth whom Christ was to reconcile by his death, also to become the church of God in heaven whom Christ was to save and glorify by his life. Rom. v. 10; Heb. x. 37; Rev. xxii. 20. But more of this anon.

And, as already hinted, the experiment of which we now speak was to have for its object, as before, to ascertain the existence and extent of man's enmity to God. Mere man had hitherto shewn himself unable to abstain from violating laws of prohibition, sanctioned by threatenings of loss. Is he so decidedly opposed to God as to be unable to obey a law of command, when sanctioned by the most glorious and affecting promises? This was the problem which, by means of the apostolic proclamation of God's command to believe, was to be solved.

Such was the nature of the second grand experiment made by God on mere man, with a view to ascertain the existence or non-existence of enmity to himself on the part of man: an experiment made through a divine law—through addressing

that law to Jews, and, in the event of their resisting and rejecting it, also to Gentiles—and through that law couched in an imperative form, or enjoined as a command.

For the purpose of prosecuting this new experiment did God, through the instrumentality of the apostles and for the space of forty years, issue, first to Jews, and failing their obedience to Gentiles, the new law of command. Its language is that which was addressed by Paul and Silas, in the name of their divine master, to the Philippian jailor: *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.* Acts xvi. 31. And its import, whatever precise phraseology may be employed, is always the same: a command to yield obedience to God, by believing on Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah, Son of God, and Saviour of the world; accompanied by a promise of salvation, with eternal glory, to all by whom this act of obedience should be rendered. Acts ii. 36—40; iii. 19—26; iv. 2. 10—12. 33; v. 29—32, &c., &c.

God, it thus appears, from the period of his well beloved Son's ascension up on high, until the Jews had *filled up the measure of their iniquities* by finally, completely, and nationally *refusing to have this man to reign over them*, Luke xix. 14—27, Acts xxviii. 25—28, 1 Thessal. ii. 12—16, was issuing his second law or law of command to man. This law simply prescribed faith in Jesus of Nazareth. That is, faith in him as the Messiah or Christ—as the being *of whom Moses in the law and the prophets had spoken*. There was involved in this law of the gospel itself, properly speaking, no prohibition. Divine prohibitions had been the grand characteristic of the law of Moses throughout; but with the fulfilment of that law by him who *was the end of it for righteousness*, its prohibitions ceased to have any existence, as imposed on human beings by God. Rom. xiv. 14—23, &c. The gospel which was proclaimed in consequence of Christ's death and

resurrection, was, as its name implies, *good tidings* :* these having respected the advent of the Messiah, the accomplishment of the work of righteousness and salvation by him, and the spiritual and heavenly blessings which are thereby bestowed ; and having been attended with a command to yield to the message announcing these glorious truths implicit credit. Belief, as an act of obedience to this command, carried along with it forgiveness of all previous shortcomings, transgressions, and iniquities, of whatsoever nature and magnitude they might be. Matt. xii. 31. He who believed *had his sins blotted out* ; Acts iii. 19 ; and *was justified from all things, from which he could not have been justified by the law of Moses*. Ibid. xiii. 39. Nay, more : faith implied a possession of the earnest of the heavenly kingdom ; Heb. xi. 1 ; 2 Cor. v. 5 ; and, at the close of the then period of Jewish probation, an entrance upon the full and eternal enjoyment of it 2 Timothy iv. 8 ; Heb. x. 37 ; xii. 25 — 28. For Jesus not only *died for the offences*, or to take away the offences of those who credited the gospel testimony, but he also *rose again for their justification*, or to put them in possession of the first fruits of his heavenly glory. Rom. iv. end. See also the 6th chapter, from the beginning downwards. Great, however, as were the privileges connected with faith, correspondingly great were the disadvantages which attached to unbelief. Those who believed not God's message of love and mercy — who obeyed not the divine command to that effect — stood condemned before God : *condemned already*, John iii. 18, and exposed to a *heavier condemnation afterwards*. Condemned already, as having by the crucifixion of Jesus in flesh committed *the sin against the Son of Man*, and as having, on that account, incurred the punishment of loss of their earthly privileges and possessions ; exposed to a heavier condemnation afterwards, as having, by unbelief in

* Ευαγγελιον.

Jesus glorified, committed *the sin against the Holy Ghost*, and as having, on that account, incurred the punishment of complete and everlasting exclusion from the blessings of the kingdom of heaven. Matt. xii. 31, 32.*

SECTION THIRD.

CONSEQUENCES RESPECTIVELY OF FAITH AND UNBELIEF.

Reflecting on what has been said we are led to discover, that to believe, in obedience to a divine command, in the truth of a divinely revealed fact, was an act of far more importance, and involved in it far more valuable and glorious consequences, than was in itself, or could have been the result of, that mere passive abstinence from disobeying a divine prohibition, which was the amount of what was exacted at the hands of our first progenitor: for the longest perseverance in abstaining from disobedience to the one divine prohibition addressed to him could have ensured to Adam no more than a continuation of his earthly life;† whereas obedience to the one divine command to believe entitled him by whom it was performed to the possession and enjoyment of heavenly blessings.‡

* He who believed in Jesus glorified, in obedience to the divine law of command, enjoyed complete forgiveness of the sin committed by him in crucifying Christ—indeed more than forgiveness, for he had admission into the heavenly kingdom; whereas he who believed not, and thereby disobeyed the gospel command, had no forgiveness: his greater sin in rejecting Jesus glorified sealing down upon him and confirming the inferior sin which he had committed in rejecting Christ incarnate. The Greek word for *world* is in the passage referred to both in the text and here, not *κοσμος* or *οικουμενη*, but *αιων*, *age* or *dispensation*.

† Just as continued abstinence from disobedience to the divine prohibitions addressed to them could have ensured to the Jews no more than the continuance of their earthly church condition.

‡ In a most important sense the privilege of the future enjoyment of life everlasting had always been annexed to faith. See Heb. xi. 1, *indeed, throughout*.

And so, on the other hand, we are led to discover, that disobedience to the divine command to believe involved in it greater and more grievous consequences than Adam's violation of the one prohibition had done. Adam merely lost a life and privileges which were earthly; but the Jews by unbelief, in addition to sustaining the loss of all the earthly privileges which as the earthly church of God they had up to that period possessed, underwent what was infinitely worse, exclusion from all those heavenly privileges which were held up to view and promised as the reward of the obedience of faith.

In this way do we acquire a clear and consistent idea of the twofold punishment which awaited the finally impenitent and unbelieving Jews—a twofold punishment corresponding exactly to their twofold criminality: first, the punishment of loss, or deprivation of their rank and character as the Old Testament church of God—a punishment which had been suspended over their heads from the moment of their crucifying the Lord of Glory, its infliction having been delayed for the purpose of affording them space and opportunity to repent;* and secondly, the punishment of exclusion from all the rights, privileges, and blessings of the New Testament or heavenly church.† Every one who obeyed the command to believe escaped the latter punishment, his faith being *counted unto him for righteousness*, Rom. iv. 3, and implying admission into the heavenly glory. Nay, if a Jew,

* In a human sense: for in reality the space of forty years' urging of the command to believe on Jesus crucified and glorified as their Messiah or Christ was conceded to the Jews, that in rejecting him glorified they might have the opportunity of manifesting still deadlier enmity to God than they had done in crucifying him.

† Parable of the unjust steward. Luke xvi. 1—12. The Jews were the unjust steward; the unrighteous mammon were the Old Testament privileges which they forfeited by putting Jesus to death; Rom. iii. 1, 2; ix. 3—5; and the true riches were the New Testament privileges, of which, in consequence of their unbelief in Jesus risen again as their Messiah, they were never put in possession.

the person believing may be said in a certain sense to have escaped even the former punishment also ; for, although in common with the rest of his countrymen he was of necessity deprived of the privileges of the earthly church, nevertheless in inheriting the privileges of the heavenly church, he may be said to have inherited the privileges of the earthly church likewise—the latter having been merely the shadow of the former, and he therefore, in possessing the substance, having actually possessed both.

There existed evidently a very important difference between a Jew who believed and a Gentile who believed, a Jew who disbelieved and a Gentile who disbelieved the gospel testimony. A Gentile, as having never been subject to Moses' law, it follows of necessity could neither by believing escape its curses, nor by disbelieving incur them. Therefore, as respects the two classes, Jews and Gentiles, during the period of the proclamation of the apostolic testimony, matters stood as follows : Jews who believed escaped both the punishment of the loss of earthly privileges,* and the punishment of exclusion from heavenly ones ; Gentiles who believed merely escaped the latter punishment, or that of exclusion. Jews who disbelieved incurred both the kinds of punishment, they forfeited their earthly privileges, and they were excluded from heavenly ones ; Gentiles who disbelieved incurred only the latter. At the same time it should be observed, in order to render my statement complete, that Gentiles who believed, in addition to their escape from the punishment of exclusion from heavenly blessings by possessing Christ's righteousness and life, may be said in a certain sense to have escaped likewise from the condemnation connected with the sin and death of Adam ; while on the contrary, Gentiles who believed not remained under the full effects of that condemnation to which

* In the sense mentioned in the last paragraph, that of enjoying the shadowy earthly privileges in the substantial heavenly ones.

as Adam's descendants they were subjected. The former had sin and death swallowed up in their consciences in righteousness and life everlasting; over the latter sin and death held full and undisturbed sway. In addition to which it may be still further remarked,—indeed, what I have to say is implied as a corollary in what goes before,—that although, on the one hand, Gentiles who had not been subject to Moses' law could neither escape from nor incur its condemnation, yet on the other, by becoming Abraham's descendants through faith, Rom. iv. 12—17, Gal. iii. 29, Gentiles immediately acquired the glorious privilege of inheriting and possessing, upon a footing of perfect equality with Jewish believers themselves, all promised heavenly and spiritual blessings. Acts x. 9—16; 44—48; xv. 7—11; Ephes. ii. 11—22.

SECTION FOURTH.

THE REWARD OF FAITH.

Are my readers now prepared to understand the fact that, with the second law, or law of command, or law of faith, prescribed as the only law of God to Jews and Gentiles during the forty years of the apostolic ministry and preaching, stood connected the promise of eternal life as the reward of obedience to it?

Reward, I say advisedly. From the transgression of Adam till the death and resurrection of Christ, all who believed,—for as observed already, and as is plain from the whole scope and tenor of the Old Testament Scriptures, the law of faith or command to believe took effect and came into operation immediately after the fall,* although not separated from other divine laws till Christ rose again,—*had respect* to the blessings of the kingdom of the future Messiah, as *the*

* Referring to Gen. iii. 15.

recompense of the reward. Heb. xi. 26. They lived in the faith, and they died in the faith of ultimately attaining to and possessing it.* Faith in them was, then, an act of obedience, and the life and blessedness of the Messiah were to constitute its reward. And from the resurrection of Christ till the cessation of the personal ministry of the apostles, followed up as that event was by the infliction of condign punishment upon the Abrahamic church and nation, was the obedience of faith alone prescribed, Acts xvi. 31, Rom. i. 5, Ibid. iii. 21—31, and was eternal life held up as the prize to be striven for and won by those who believed, whether apostles or their adherents, whether Jews or Gentiles. 1 Cor. ix. 27; Phil. iii. 8—14; 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8; Heb. iii. 6, 14; Gal. iii. 1—4.†

Eternal life, then, was the appropriate reward of the obedience of faith, yielded by man to God from the period of the fall; and more especially yielded by Jews and Gentiles during the forty years of probation conceded by God, after the resurrection of Christ, to the church and the world. As the original prohibition to Adam, and as subsequent prohibitions to the Israelites, had been enforced by means of the sanction of punishment, denounced as necessarily to be inflicted in the event of these prohibitions being violated; so was the command to believe enforced by the sanction of reward, promised to all who should comply with it. *He that came to God* before the appearance of Christ, and he that did so after the death and resurrection of Christ, equally did so *believing*

* See Heb. xi. throughout.

† How strong some of the expressions made use of with reference to the strenuousness of the acts of faith to be put forth during the issuing of the command to believe the second law by the Apostles. *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.* Phil. ii. 12. *Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life.* 1 Tim. vi. 12., &c. &c. And how numerous and impressive their cautions against cherishing a spirit of unbelief. *Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.* Heb. iv. 1, &c. &c.

that God is, or obeying the law which enjoined faith; and believing also that *he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him*, or satisfied that obeying the command they should reap as their reward the heavenly blessedness which was therewith connected. Heb. xi. 6.

Just as a divine prohibition* differs from a divine command,† so evidently does the loss of earthly benefits, as the punishment of violating the former,‡ differ from the enjoyment of heavenly blessings, as the reward of obeying the latter.§ And as the first law of prohibition to Adam did not, properly speaking, hold out promises, but threatened punishment, Gen. ii. 16, 17, so the second law of command, addressed first to Jews and subsequently also to Gentiles after the resurrection of Christ, did not, properly speaking, threaten punishment, but promised a reward. Acts xvi. 31; Eph. ii. 8. This, however, will appear more clearly as we proceed.

Rewards and punishments have frequently been spoken of by men styled theologians, as the ordinary sanctions of divine law. This, in the sense in which the notion is commonly entertained, is erroneous. Divine laws, like the great majority of those that are human, being generally laws of prohibition, neither have nor admit of any other sanction than that of punishment. The reason being that the object of such laws is not to constrain to good, but to restrain from evil. They are made *not for the righteous, but for the unrighteous*. 1 Tim. i. 9—11. And, therefore, they are enforced only by the threatening of penalties. It is peculiar to the law of faith, or command to believe, to be enforced by the sanction of reward. Heb. xi. 26; xii. 2.

Upon Jesus the Messiah, the second or heavenly man, 1 Cor. xv. 47, was the second law, or law of faith, imposed

* Thou shalt not. Gen. ii. 16, 17. Exod. xx. 13—18.

† Thou shalt. Matt. xxii. 37—39. ‡ Gen. iii. 16—19, 22—24.

§ Luke xxiv. 51. Acts i. 9. ii. 32, 33. xiii. 30—35. Phil. ii. 8, 9.

John x. 18 ; 2 Cor. iv. 13 ; Heb. xii. 1, 2. Not exclusively, for to him were likewise prohibitions of every kind addressed: it having been his business, among other things, to shew that he could abstain from violating every one of them, and thereby had a right to escape, except by his own voluntary act, from every penalty annexed to transgression. John x. 18 ; Heb. ix. 14. But to him the law of faith was addressed as properly his own law, and as that which, being fulfilled by him, implied the fulfilment of every other. He could fulfil the law of command, the most difficult of all laws ; and therefore, *à fortiori*, he was qualified to fulfil, as he actually did fulfil, the inferior laws of prohibition. Having then received from his Heavenly Father the command to believe in every part of the revealed divine testimony, and having had the promise of life everlasting annexed to compliance with this law, we find that *for the joy that was set before him*, as the reward of his obedience, he not only underwent every other species of suffering and discharged every other duty, but, when the proper time had arrived, *endured the cross, despising the shame*. Heb. xii. 2. Thus acting, the *obedience of faith* was complete ; Rom. x. 4 ; and, having been raised from the dead, he was put in possession of the promised reward, for he *sat down at the right hand of the throne of God*. Heb. xii. 2. See also Phil. ii 6—11.*

If, then, divine law, after Christ's death and resurrection, was issued to mere man in a new form, namely, that of com-

* Why were prohibitions, accompanied with threatenings in the event of their being transgressed, issued to mere man ? Because mere man could and would disobey.—Why, instead of prohibitions accompanied with threatenings, was, properly speaking, a law of command accompanied with promises, issued to Jesus Christ, the second and heavenly man ? Because as Jesus neither could nor did disobey, to threaten him was unnecessary ; and because as he possessed the ability to obey every divine command, and thereby to earn as his reward every divine blessing, it was necessary, by addressing to him law in its positive or commanding form, to afford him the opportunity of doing so. Laws prohibitory and menacing suit the unrighteous creature. 1 Tim. i. 9—11. Laws imperative and promising suited the righteous Creator. Matt. xxii. 37—39. Luke x. 27, 28. Rom. x. 5. Heb. xii. 1, 2.

mand, *believe*, Acts ii. 36, xvi. 31, it was also accompanied by a new sanction, namely, that of promise of a reward, *this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life*. 1 John ii. 25. Formerly, God had been dealing with mere man as he had dealt with the first Adam in paradise, prohibiting and threatening; after the resurrection and ascension of Christ, however, he proceeded to deal with mere man as he had dealt with the second man, the Lord from heaven, during the period of his incarnation, commanding and promising.

SECTION FIFTH.

FAITH THE GIFT OF GOD, NOT THE RESULT OF HUMAN PRINCIPLES AND EFFORTS.

At this point, I fancy that I overhear some one more distinguished by zeal than knowledge, exclaiming: "What! faith prescribed as a command! Surely this must be a mistake on the part of the author. Faith is in Scripture expressly declared to be *the gift of God*. Eph. ii. 8. And those who believe are continually represented as having been enlightened from above. 2 Cor. iv. 6; Eph. i. 17—20; ii. 4—6. How, under such circumstances, can that which, as God's gift, it is competent for him alone to bestow, be spoken of as an act which man, as a matter of duty, is called on to perform?"

Passing over all verbal criticisms on the passages quoted,* and admitting at once and cheerfully the complete accuracy of the principle that faith, wherever it has existed, has been conferred on man directly by God himself, not only independently of all human efforts to acquire it but in spite of all human efforts in opposition to it; and, farther, reminding the objector that I am not contending for faith having been prescribed as a law to be obeyed for any longer period than

* For instance, on Eph. ii. 8. See the Greek.

during the forty years which elapsed from the day of Pentecost till the destruction of Jerusalem ; * I proceed to relieve his fears and anxieties for my orthodoxy, by hinting to him, that the very purpose of God, in issuing for a time the command to believe, was to establish the objector's own professedly favourite principle—the grand principle of revelation—that faith is and can only be the gift of God.

This will be best evinced by making it the subject of a distinct proposition. In doing which, I remark,

That the grand object of God in prescribing for a time faith in himself as a duty to be performed by Jews and Gentiles, like his object in prescribing abstinence from eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil to Adam, was to bring out an exhibition, not of what mere man could do, but of what mere man could not do.† His procedure in issuing the law which commanded to believe, was of the nature of a second grand experiment, subservient to a second grand manifestation on the part of man of his essential and entire enmity or opposition to God, made through the medium of his inability to obey it. Rom. viii. 7. Accordingly, the law of faith, or second law, prescribed to man led to man's shewing that, so far from being inclined or able to yield obedience to it, his whole heart, soul, mind, and affections rose up in sturdy

* Thousands of our so-called evangelical clergy no doubt assert that the command to believe is issued by God now — I beg their pardon, is issued by God *through the instrumentality of their reverences* now, and will continue to be so issued till the end of time. The objector may deal with such gentlemen as he pleases. Their view differs most decidedly from mine. And what is more, differs most decidedly from that suggested in scripture. No command to believe has been issued by God since the destruction of Jerusalem and close of the Jewish commonwealth, as it shall be my endeavour in an after part of this work to shew. Commands to believe proceeding from the lips of human beings now, are most awfully anti-Christian.

† Mere man, I say. Because the law of faith addressed to Jesus Christ, the divine man, was obeyed by him. *What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.* Rom. viii. 3. Also John iii. 14. 15.

and determined opposition to it. As *the law* of Moses with its multiform regulations, ordinances, and prohibitions,—with all its threatenings and curses,—had *entered* to the family of Israel, not that they might abstain from violating it, but *that* through their incessant and flagrant transgressions of it *the offence might abound*; Rom. v. 20; so did the law of faith, which did not prohibit but commanded, which did not threaten curses but promised blessings, enter, in order to shew that the same principle of enmity to God which had led to breaches of the former, would necessarily disobey the latter—that so far from man's enmity to God being susceptible of being mitigated or subdued by law issued in its most engaging and attractive form, that enmity would only thereby be the more irritated and stimulated into exercise. Rom. vii. 5, 8.

The law of faith never was obeyed under the influence of powers, principles, and motives natural to one clothed with the human form, except by the Lord Jesus Christ, the second and heavenly man. Rom. viii. 3.* In every case in which it has been addressed to the mere earthly man, the mere descendant of Adam, it has been opposed, disobeyed, and trampled under foot.†

Satisfied, however, the objector is not:—"But have not some men, in all ages, yielded obedience to the law of faith? Indeed, were not such persons numerous during the apostolic period?"

* The serpent is the emblem of human nature, or rather human nature is the serpentine nature. Matt. xxiii. 33. With this nature Jesus when he became incarnate clothed himself, so that he appeared in the likeness of the nature of the serpent. Rom. viii. 3. However, it was merely in *the likeness* of it: for he came to destroy the serpent's nature and reign, not to promote or perpetuate them. 1 John iii. 8. Also Heb. ii. 14. The serpent and the serpent's brood had stung and bit, and in consequence of this men had died. The brazen serpent, or that which bore the exact likeness of the serpent, but was the serpent's mortal foe, by being elevated on the pole cured and gave life. Numb. xxi. 4—9. John iii. 14. See also Gen. iii. 15.

† Isaiah liii. 1. See Acts of the Apostles, *passim*.

Yes, unquestionably. But in every such case, so far from the obedience of faith having been rendered under the influence of fleshly principles or motives, it has always manifested itself in spite of and in opposition to them. Belief in the divine testimony has in every age afforded evidence not of man's ability, but of man's inability: having been invariably the result not of the power of man, but of the power of God, shewn in overcoming the natural and otherwise invincible resistance offered by the human mind to the law enjoining faith. When Adam, after transgressing, believed in the promised seed of the woman who *should bruise the serpent's head*; Gen. iii. 15; when Abraham believed in the future advent, in the person of one of his posterity, of the seed in whom *all the families of the earth were to be blessed*, Gen. xii. 3, xvii. 1—7, xviii. 18, and when, in one of the most trying situations conceivable, he clung to this object of his confidence, *against hope, believing in hope*; Gen. xxii. 1—10; Rom. iv. 18; when Saul of Tarsus, afterwards Paul the Apostle, believed in that Jesus of Nazareth whom once he had hated, whose saints he had persecuted, and whose cause he had purposed and hoped to trample in the dust; Acts ix. 1—20; all equally credited the divine testimony, not as human beings, but under the influence of principles which contradicted and stood opposed to those of human nature. They believed, not because they were men—not because fleshly reason dictated the obedience of faith—but because they had been enlightened and influenced from above. And so in every other case where faith has existed. It has always and necessarily been of *the operation of God*. Coloss. ii. 12. Persons believing have done so not as born of woman—not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man,—but as born of God.* As partakers of human nature, they have pertinaciously and

* John i. 13. Granville Penn has a curious and interesting note on this passage, in his *Annotations on the Book of the New Covenant*. London, 1837.

successfully resisted the law of faith; obedience to it they have rendered only by having been made *partakers of the divine nature*. 2 Peter i. 4. See also John xvii. 3.

This, then, being the case, the law of faith, or command to believe, proves as decidedly man's enmity to God when it is obeyed, as when it is disobeyed. Obeyed, it is in spite of the opposition to it which is essential to, inherent in, and inseparable from human nature; in fact, in consequence of God himself having by his own mighty power overcome that opposition. Disobeyed, it is in consequence of human nature being left to itself, and to its own native workings and tendencies.

SECTION SIXTH.

THE GREATER EXHIBITION OF ENMITY ON THE PART OF THE JEWS AFTER THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST IN DISOBEYING THE LAW OF FAITH, AS HAVING EXPRESSLY CONTRADICTED A GREATER EXHIBITION OF GOODNESS ON THE PART OF GOD, AND AS HAVING IMPLIED A GREATER VIOLATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY, NECESSARILY FOLLOWED BY A GREATER PUNISHMENT THAN THE CRUCIFIXION OF CHRIST HAD DESERVED AND INCURRED.

God after the resurrection of Christ issued the law of faith to Jews and Gentiles, that he might thereby bring to light and develop the existence in human nature of a degree of enmity to himself far more deep-seated, awful, and astounding, than the violation of laws of prohibition by a single individual and by a body of individuals had been capable of evincing. Man's pride of heart, it may be alleged, might justifiably revolt from threatenings as a slavish mode of dealing with him. Well, here is God condescending to deal with man after a totally different fashion: God no longer

threatens, but promises. In issuing the law of command he holds out not a menace of damnation, but a promise of salvation with eternal glory; and this not on condition of man's abstinence from evil, or of his performance of any act which might be construed to involve harsh and painful restraints, but solely on condition of his believing what God hath said concerning the blessings which he bestows on him through Jesus Christ. Can such terms be regarded as severe? Is not the reward annexed to compliance with them most splendid and alluring? Believing, in obedience to the command, men were to become sons of God and heirs of glory. Besides, as the injunction to believe was founded on the fact of Christ *having loved them, and washed them from their sins in his own blood*, Rev. i. 5, it was to the principle of gratitude to God, if such a principle existed in human nature, and not to principles which might be stigmatised as mean and debasing, that the appeal was made. But what of all that? Man, when the gospel command was addressed to him, resisted it — treated it as he had formerly treated the law of prohibition — shewed himself capable of turning a deaf ear to every divine promise, unsusceptible of being operated on by the most affecting incidents and declarations of divine love: under the influence of hatred to God, he rejected all his overtures of mercy, and called him liar to his face. 1 John v. 10. And from whom proceeded this most outrageous exhibition of enmity? Not from a single individual, as in the case of Adam; not from Jews only, as happened before Christ came, in consequence of divine law having during that period been addressed exclusively to them; but from every person, Jew and Gentile, to whom the command to believe was issued, and whose opposition to himself God was not pleased to subdue: all, all, whose minds continued fleshly, and that without one single exception, refused to credit the gospel testimony. Left to himself, man displayed

the innate enmity of his mind to God by hating, not the hand that had smitten him—a circumstance which might have been anticipated,—but actually that glorious being who presented himself to him in the character and attitude of a benefactor, promising on the sole condition of his obedience to the law of faith to bestow on him life everlasting.

And this, too, during the long period of forty years. God, after addressing the second law of command to human beings, did not as in the case of the first law of prohibition addressed to Adam make one act of disobedience the ground of inflicting punishment; on the contrary, he bore long and patiently with his rebellious creatures. A protracted space for repentance was vouchsafed, message after message of mercy was sent, exhortation after exhortation to submit to God's righteous authority was urged and enforced. The law of faith was commended to the obedience of Jew and Gentile in every conceivable form, with every variety of entreaty, and under the most affecting circumstances. *Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die, O house of Israel*, Ezek. xxxiii. 11,* as it was God's Old Testament language, so may it be said to have been the import and to have breathed the spirit of the apostolic preaching.† But all in vain: man is God's enemy. The law of faith, which is also the law of love, whenever proclaimed, except where God himself specially interposed to enforce it, served but the more powerfully to stimulate and call forth into exercise man's hatred to it, and to him from whom it had emanated. From the beginning till the end of the apostolic ministry man's displays of opposition to God were continually on the increase. At last, the time of probation ended; the forty years ran out. Matt. xvi. 28. xxiv. 34. Heb. iii. 7—iv. 11. x. 37. The law of command, or law of faith, ceased to be imposed; no further opportunity

* Also Ezek. xviii. 31.

† See Acts ii. 38—40. iii. 19—26. xiii. 26—41. Rom. ix. 1—5, &c. &c.

of yielding obedience to it was conceded ; the sentence went forth, and the judgment was executed. Luke xix. 41—44, Matt. xxv. 31—46.

Let it not be said by way of an apology for this display of man's enmity, that proofs of God's having issued the second law, proofs of his having given the command to believe, were wanting. Such an excuse, if attempted, would be altogether without foundation. Evidences that the law of faith in Jesus Christ had proceeded from God positively abounded. They were obtruded on the notice of every one, Gentile as well as Jew, by whom the gospel message was heard. The Apostles spoke as having witnessed personally the facts of Christ's death and resurrection. Acts ii. 32 ; 1 Cor. xv. 15. The purity and disinterestedness of their conduct tended, even on natural principles, to destroy all suspicion of their having been actuated by low and selfish motives. Acts xx. 33—35 ; 1 Thess. ii. 1—12. But still more, *the signs and wonders and divers gifts of the Holy Ghost* ; Heb. ii. 4—the miracles which, in presence of Jew and Gentile, the Apostles were continually performing ; Acts iii. 1—11 ; v. 1—11 ; xiv. 8—18—gave a divine attestation to their ministry, and to the truths which they proclaimed, of the most striking description : an attestation which, had we not known human nature, we might have supposed would be altogether irresistible. The churches, too, which they planted were in consequence of the miraculous powers possessed by their members, 1 Cor. xii. 7—31, wherever they existed, so many standing proofs and mementoes of the divine origin and authority of the gospel command. 2 Cor. iii. 1—3 But no evidence, however strong, could, upon men left to the operation of mere principles of human nature, produce any saving impression. The law of faith, the stronger the proofs by which it was supported, was by such men but the more stedfastly resisted. Prophecies were heard by them ; Acts xiii. 40, 41 ; but these they

despised, and the utterers of them they hated and persecuted. Ibid. 50, 51. Miracles were seen by them: sometimes, as in the case of that of Paul wrought at Lystra, these produced temporary effects; Acts xiv. 11—18; but much oftener they were misrepresented, ridiculed, and rejected. Acts iv. 15—17. See Acts xvii. 18—33.* If any effects (excepting always the case of those who were taught from above) were experienced, it was merely in the natural conscience, in the shape of suspicions, or perhaps even of a temporary conviction, that what was stated might be true: Acts xiv. 18: but the intense anguish to which such fleshly and temporary feelings gave rise tended but the more to call forth a counteracting effort to repress and stifle them, and to stimulate the enmity of the fleshly mind against those who, by means of their preaching, had proved to the parties in question such a source of annoyance. Acts vii. 54; Ibid. xiv. 19.

Thus did God do to his vineyard, the house of Israel, all that he could do in order to prevail on its members to believe, Isaiah v. 4, without, as he did in the case of the members of *the household of faith*, actually interfering with, overcoming, and setting aside the principles of human nature. His grand object in issuing the command to believe was to shew that man could not obey it; and thereby to give occasion to an exhibition of enmity to himself, on the part of man, greater than any which had previously been made: to accomplish which it was requisite that, in the case of the great majority of those to whose ears the gospel command came, human nature should be left to itself. Higher principles than those of human nature, introduced and brought into operation in every case, would obviously have interfered with the experiment. Man, therefore, in listening to the command to believe, was addressed upon his own principles. Still, however, in order

* This was what had happened in the case of Christ himself. Matt. xii. 24.

to the full success of the experiment, it was necessary that human nature should have fair play. Every method, every expedient, every inducement of a natural and fleshly description behoved to be had recourse to, which appeared likely to influence human beings to believe. Therefore it was that, in issuing and imposing the law of faith, God gave to Jew and Gentile every proof of its having proceeded from himself, and plied them with every merely human motive to obey it, which the most ingenious and sceptical could have devised or desired. In the miraculous powers wherewith not merely Apostles, but the members of Apostolic churches were, as we have seen, endowed, as well as in the nature of the facts themselves which the Apostles declared and testified, evidence of the truth of Christianity of the strongest and most convincing kind was afforded. And not only so, but to all who heard the gospel he addressed the most cogent exhortations, spoke in the most affectionate manner, and presented the most solemn and impressive warnings: nay, persevered in urging them to submit to his authority and accept of his proffered mercy, long after their stubborn and insolent opposition to him, and treatment of his heavenly messengers, might have appeared to justify him in leaving them to themselves. All this he did, because his determination was that the experiment should be complete. No one was to be allowed to say that a single human motive had by him been omitted, that a single human principle had by him been left unaddressed. Although he withheld from by far the greater number of those who were commanded to believe, that sovereign and divine efficacy which he put forth in the case of the elect, and by which alone was the opposition of human nature to the truth in them subdued, Acts xiii. 48, yet there was no motive which mere human mind could appreciate, and by which mere human nature was capable of being influenced, which in the case of the reprobate was left untried. The object was to shew that human nature

was just as incompetent to obey the divine law of command, as it had previously evinced itself to abstain from violating the divine law of prohibition—as incompetent to be influenced by the prospect of divine reward, as it had been by the menace of divine punishment. The object was to afford to man an additional and higher proof, by the result, that his mind was enmity against God. Under such circumstances, not to have left human nature to itself, and to its own capabilities and resources, would clearly have been to nullify the experiment. Accordingly, human nature alone was, in the case of the great majority of those who were commanded to believe, operated on. And human nature, plied with every conceivable argument and inducement to obey the command, and yet displaying decided, increasing, and uncompromising hostility to it, of course realised the end aimed at. The experiment was thus but too painfully successful. The divine law issued in the form of a command to believe the gospel, and accompanied with the promise in the event of its being complied with of life everlasting, having been by every mere fleshly mind resisted and disobeyed, brought to light and established the fact of such a degree of enmity to God existing in man's mind, as totally disqualified him for yielding obedience to God's law even when addressed to him in the best, the most advantageous, and the most attractive form with which it was capable of being invested. Rom. viii. 7.

Can we wonder at guilt so great as that which man in disobeying the law of faith exhibited, having been visited with a punishment correspondingly great likewise? At an exhibition of enmity to God so much greater than that of Adam, having incurred a degree of divine wrath so much greater than that which he by his one transgression drew down upon himself?

Responsibility, or a sense of obligation to act up to the law imposed by a superior, and of desert of punishment in the

event of that law being violated, is, be it remembered, a principle essential to human nature. Essential *subjectively*, I mean. In consequence of this man is, in exact proportion to the degree in which his natural conscience is enlightened,* capable of contracting guilt, and thereby, even in his own apprehensions, of deserving punishment. He that knoweth slightly his master's will, and disobeys it, is worthy of few stripes; he that knoweth after a superior fashion and in a superior degree that will, and disobeys it, is worthy of many stripes.† This responsibility human nature cannot shake off; this responsibility it is not desirable that it should shake off. It matters not to this that man's nature has been conferred upon him by God; that man's every thought and action is the result of God's sovereign arrangement and disposal; and that man is in every point of view, whether sinning or obeying, subject to the divine control, and subservient to the manifestation of the divine glory. All this is true; all this is seen, acknowledged, and even gloried in by every one who is taught from above. But human nature is, notwithstanding all this, where God's law comes in, and in exact proportion as it does come in, responsible to God; that is, is consciously under an obligation either to abstain from violating that law or to obey it, and is consciously obnoxious to merited punishment in the event of disobedience. Responsibility is thus essential to man's nature; not certainly in the way in which popular preachers and their ignorant followers imagine, ‡ but

* Light upon natural principles, however great, is actually darkness upon spiritual principles. Matt. vi. 23. 1 Cor. i. 17—25.

† Luke xii. 47, 48. Adam knew his master's will slightly, and for violating it was punished with the forfeiture of this life—the few stripes; the Jews knew their master's will in a much superior manner, and therefore in forfeiting their earthly privileges, and being excluded from the kingdom of heaven, they were punished with many stripes. Consider the scope of our Lord's instructions in the passage where this figurative language occurs.

‡ For instance, responsibility has nothing whatever to do with the *divine nature*, whether as existing in Christ himself or in the members of his church. What blundering and floundering do ordinary works on the subject of theology exhibit through ignorance of, or through want of power to apply this fact.

it nevertheless exists : and all the dispensations of God towards man—all his experiments upon man—assume it as a fixed principle, and tend but to bring out and develop it. When God's law issues to man and enters into his natural conscience, man becomes responsible to God, or under an obligation to obey it ; and when that law is violated, a punishment corresponding to the nature and extent of his disobedience is felt by him to be deserved, and is inflicted. The punishment no doubt has a *natural* connexion with the guilt incurred. So much so, that the guilt and the punishment may fairly and properly enough be regarded as standing to each other in the relation of cause and effect. This however is not inconsistent with there existing likewise a *moral* connexion between the one and the other. There is always and necessarily, on the part of him to whom divine law and his obligation to obey it have been made known,* more or less of a conviction,—a suspicion, be it called,—that if he disobey, and if suffering, whether in the form of loss, exclusion, or destruction, follow, such suffering will be the result of moral demerit. Whether he see this or not, and to whatever extent he may see it, a man taught from above sees that not only is punishment beautifully and harmoniously *adapted to* guilt, but that the one is also *deserved by* the other. *Else how could God judge the world ?* Rom. iii. 6.

This being the case,

Consider first, that the Jews were placed in circumstances, as respects knowledge, superior to those of the Gentiles, and superior especially to those of Adam. Adam was a grown infant, destitute of all experience ; and in a great measure, up even to the period of the fall, destitute of knowledge likewise.

* Observe, “to whom divine law,” &c. “have been made known,” as happened in the case of Adam and the Jews. God now makes known to his church, not divine law but the divine gospel ; or rather what divine law was, by bestowing upon them the present knowledge and enjoyment of the gospel. Natural men now impose law on themselves, God not doing so ; and this because he is not now revealed in the character of a lawgiver, but in that of a Saviour.

The Jews, on the other hand, possessed not only the ordinary experience of human beings, but also experience and knowledge of a very peculiar and excellent kind. In their synagogues or places of assembly were read every Sabbath day the Old Testament scriptures. Acts xiii. 27. Before the eyes of such of them as inhabited the metropolis, were presented every day scenes of a nature well calculated to inspire their minds with sentiments of devotion : these scenes giving place from time to time to scenes of a still more affecting and solemn description. All of them, by means of their scriptures, were made acquainted with the creation of man, the law originally imposed on him, his transgression of it, and the consequences. Through the same medium did they learn the iniquities and punishment of the antediluvian world. They knew the call and character of their ancestor Abraham. They knew the law which had been given to their forefathers by Moses at Mount Sinai. With the history of their nation,—of God's dealings with it, of its numerous and aggravated transgressions, of the judgments which it had undergone, and of the promises made by God to it,—they were familiar. Concerning their possession of the form of divine knowledge in the law they were accustomed to make their daily boast. Rom. ii. 17—20. Nay, more : to them the Messiah had come in flesh, addressing to them his heavenly discourses, and edifying them by his personal example. Even after having put him to death, to them had his Apostles come proclaiming his resurrection, and founding on that fact a divine message of mercy, promising to them life everlasting on condition of their crediting God's testimony that Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had crucified, and whom God had raised again, was the Messiah :—the Apostles evincing their heavenly commission by the signs and wonders in attestation of it which they wrought in the presence of all the people. Upon the Jews, with every necessary proof of its divine origin, was

thus enforced the law of faith. The *truth* of the Apostolic testimony the Jews of course did not perceive; but of the *falsehood* of it they were not satisfied. In their consciences, therefore, conviction that they were doing wrong existed in a *negative* form. If they did not know for certain that the Apostles were proclaiming truth, neither were they sure on the other hand that in listening to their statements they were listening to what was false. Conscience whispered to them that what these men averred *might be true*. Such was their state, and connected with it was their responsibility. So circumstanced, how did the Jews proceed? If they did not obey the command to believe, did they at all events act up to the dictates of their own consciences in abstaining, as Gamaliel advised, from opposing and persecuting men and a cause which they could not satisfy themselves to be erroneous? Acts v. 34—40. Certainly not. They opposed the Apostolic testimony from the first; and as proofs, and even a *negative* conviction in their own minds of its truth increased, so did their opposition to it increase also. Hence the awful guilt which they incurred in rejecting the gospel, and in maltreating those by whom it was proclaimed. They withstood and overbore, in so doing, their own convictions. And thus the greatness of their knowledge compared with that of Adam, as it implied a greater responsibility on their part than had existed on his, so likewise did it expose them, in the event of their transgressing, to a punishment greater than that to which he by his transgression had been subjected.

Consider, secondly, the vast superiority of the knowledge and experience of the Gentile world even, at the period of the advent, death, and resurrection of Christ, over what Adam while in paradise possessed, or could have possessed. Not to repeat observations which have been already made, respecting the necessary ignorance of our common progenitor, and only requesting that this circumstance may be borne in mind as

the foundation of the contrast on which we are at present insisting, I remark, that however inferior to that of Jews might be the religious knowledge of the Gentiles, it was far from being inconsiderable. The Gentiles, as Noah's descendants, had had traditional notices of God and divine things, greatly no doubt obscured and debased by idolatry and superstition, handed down to them from the diluvian æra: Rom. i. 17—20 : * *God had not left himself without a witness among them in succeeding ages, inasmuch as he had done them good, and had given them rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness.* Acts xiv. 17. Awful catastrophes, inflicted by the divine vengeance for violations of natural conscience, had from time to time overtaken them. Genesis xix. 24, 25; Joshua, throughout. Conscience had never ceased to discharge its functions among them, Rom. ii. 14, 15; and this, in the case of many, had been quickened by the reports prevalent throughout the world concerning God's interpositions in behalf of his favoured people, Joshua ii. 8—11, and by the knowledge which they could not fail to acquire through the residence of Jews and the erection of synagogues in many of their principal cities. See Acts, *passim*. Gentiles then, at the period of Christ's coming, were possessed of the gradually accumulated knowledge and experience, as well religious as civil and political, of four thousand years. To persons so situated were the proclamation of mercy and the command to believe in it, by means of the apostolic ministry, sent; and in their sight, no less than in that of Jews, were miracles performed in attestation of the divine origin of the gospel message. Acts x. 44—46, xiii. 8—11, xiv. 8—18. Thus it appears, that inferior as was the knowledge, religious and otherwise, of Gentiles compared with that of Jews, Rom.

* From the creation of the world even. Rom. i. 20.

ii. 17—24, iii. 1, 2, ix. 3—5, it was nevertheless great, exceedingly great, compared with that of Adam; and greater consequently was their responsibility than his. Although in the event of their disobeying the law of faith they might not be punished *in all respects* as Jews were, still a judgment corresponding to the extent of their outraged and violated knowledge, especially to that which they shared in common with Jews, behoved to overtake them.

All this being certain and established, and it being also certain that the forfeiture of paradise and earthly life was the result of Adam's transgression, then what was the punishment inflicted on unbelieving Jews and Gentiles?

Under the circumstances of greater responsibility stated,

1. It behoved to be greater than that which Adam, and in him all his posterity, had incurred. Rom. v. 12, vi. 23.

2. It behoved to be something in which unbelieving Jews and Gentiles could equally participate; and therefore, it could not be forfeiture of the condition and privileges of the earthly church, a condition and privileges which as Jews had once possessed and enjoyed so they might lose, but of which, as Gentiles had never possessed them, so it was impossible that they could be deprived.

And what was this punishment?

The nature of the gospel proclamation clearly shews us.

That proclamation consisted of a command to believe in Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah, and of a promise in the event of the command being obeyed of the reward of life everlasting. Acts xvi. 31.

The punishment, then, of disobedience to the gospel command was coming short of the promised reward; or, those who did not obey the law of faith, whether Jews or Gentiles, were excluded* from the enjoyment of the privileges of the heavenly kingdom.

* Excluded themselves indeed. Acts xiii. 46.

Something totally different from the punishment inflicted on Adam for eating of the forbidden fruit, and from that inflicted on the nation of Israel for crucifying Jesus, is here visible. In both these cases, the punishment incurred and inflicted was the forfeiture or loss of advantages already possessed. Adam forfeited Paradise and this present life; the Jews forfeited their privilege of being the fleshly church of God: that is, their respective punishments consisted in *deprivation of previously enjoyed blessings*. Gen. ii. 16, 17; Deut. xxviii. 15—68. Not so, however, the punishment of disobedience to the law of faith. It respected not the past, but the future; and it consisted not in the deprivation of blessings formerly enjoyed, but in the keeping out of, or exclusion from blessings which had been held out in prospect and had never yet been enjoyed. Acts xiii. 40, 41. Jews and Gentiles disobeying the command to believe, addressed equally to both, were punished in a manner common to both, by not being permitted to enter into the heavenly glory. That is, the punishment of unbelief was *exclusion*: exclusion from future, not deprivation of past privileges. Clear and marked is the distinction: Jews were *deprived* on account of their crucifying Jesus, of blessings which they *already possessed*; they were *excluded* on account of their refusing to obey the command to believe in Jesus glorified, from *future blessings* which they had *never possessed*, their enjoyment of which, indeed, had been made to depend on the obedience of faith. And in this *exclusion* from *future* and *heavenly* blessings, although not in the *deprivation* of *past* and *earthly* ones, unbelieving Gentiles participated with unbelieving Jews.

Vastly greater and more awful certainly was their exclusion from heavenly blessings, than had been any punishment consisting in mere deprivation or loss of earthly blessings which had preceded. Former punishments differed as widely from

this as does time from eternity. Rather, as earth and heaven, as things human and things divine do not admit of comparison, the things of God so infinitely surpassing the things of man as even to swallow them up, * so cannot the loss of any earthly advantages, however valuable, admit for a single moment of being put into the scale and weighed against exclusion from blessings which are spiritual and heavenly. That which may be repaired is surely never once to be compared with that which is irreparable. Loss of earthly privileges, loss of earthly life even, is surely more than compensated by the enjoyment of heavenly privileges and life everlasting. But exclusion from heavenly privileges what can compensate for? Exclusion I say; for one circumstance remarkable as connected with the two classes of punishments which we are contrasting—a circumstance pointedly displaying the inferiority of preceding punishments to that which was inflicted upon unbelief—is this: that punishment as respects earthly privileges and blessings is merely the *loss* of them; whereas so valuable are heavenly privileges and blessings, that, as once possessed, they are possessed for ever, so the only punishment as respects them of which man is susceptible is *not to be put in possession of them*, or to be visited with the judgment of *exclusion*.

In this punishment of exclusion from heavenly blessings we have set before us *the second death*, of which mention is made in the Book of Revelation. Unbelief in Jesus crucified and glorified as the Messiah, or disobedience to *the second divine law*, the command to believe, constituted the *second sin*. Like the *first sin*, it was *a sin unto death*: but the death consequent on it one of a more awful description than *the first* which had been incurred by Adam and his posterity. 1 John v. 16, *compared with* 10. The *first death*, although truth

* Properly speaking, heavenly things do not *differ from* earthly things; they *stand opposed* to them. See my "Divine Inversion." See rather Gal. v. 17.

and justice required its infliction in one form or another upon every human being, Gen. v. 5, Ibid. 24, 2 Kings ii. 11, 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52, 1 Thess. iv. 13—17, could nevertheless be more than compensated in the case of any individual, in consequence of fleshly principles being swallowed up in him by the earnest of the life of the glorified Jesus; and he who was made a partaker of this life, implying admission on his part into the heavenly kingdom, could *not be hurt of the second death*, which consisted in exclusion from that kingdom. Rev. iii. 11. Such an one was of course triumphed over as to his fleshly nature by *the first death*; Rom. v. 12; but over him *the second death had no power*. Rev. xx. 6. Over this death, on the contrary, he as one with Christ glorified, and as inheriting the blessings of his kingdom, had power or triumphed. But how affecting the case of him who through unbelief became subjected to *the second death*. He was already a subject of *the first death*. Not satisfied with this he heaps heavier judgments upon his own head. The gates of heavenly bliss he closes by unbelief against himself, and the barriers which he thus voluntarily erects are absolutely impassable. A death more appalling than that of Adam is his portion. The sin of transgressing the law of prohibition merely cost him earthly life; but by personally disobeying the law of command he is excluding himself from the heavenly life of Christ and the church in glory: he is to the first death, consisting in the forfeiture of what was inferior, superadding the second death, consisting in exclusion from what is superior. Entrance into the kingdom of Christ and of God was what to him, as disobedient to the heavenly command, would never be conceded. How much more to be deprecated this result than mere loss of earthly life; yet mere fleshly mind feels it not. The first death, as connected with the loss of what man naturally knows something about, interests him; but the second death, as consisting in exclusion from that of which naturally

he can form no conception, and in which he does not believe, what does he care about? And yet, between the *two deaths*, viewed in the light of scripture by those who have been taught from above, what comparison can be instituted? How trivial the one! how awfully important the other! Exclusion, everlasting exclusion from the heavenly kingdom of Jesus! What heart can conceive, what tongue can express the magnitude of the evil? *Blessed, truly, and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection.* Rev. xx. 6.

Without dwelling on the fact, I may here take leave to mention, that so close was the connexion subsisting between Jesus as second Abraham and second Adam, with the Jews and with the whole human family, that as in his death both had virtually died, so in his rising again both virtually experienced a resurrection. John xi. 25. When he rose, both Jew and Gentile as it were rose in him; and both as thus risen were summoned to judgment. It was indeed the fact of Christ's resurrection which so far brought Jews and Gentiles into a new state and condition, as to render them capable of receiving from above a new law; or they were subjected to the second law, the law of command, only in consequence of the altered circumstances into which through Christ's resurrection they had been brought. He rose from the grave; they also, in a certain sense, *came out of their graves*. Risen they appeared at his judgment-seat: the law of faith was the test or standard applied, and the reception which it met with was the ground of justification or condemnation. Jesus, both in applying the standard and in pronouncing judgment, appeared in glory; that is, appeared manifesting himself, and through himself his heavenly Father, in company with his holy angels or messengers, the prophets and apostles.

During forty years he continued issuing his new law of faith, or applying his test of character, first to the Jew and then to the Greek. At last the period of probation ended,

the time for judgment arrived. Then, placing on his right hand, or introducing into heaven, those who had had the law of faith, which is also the law of love, carried home with power to their hearts and consciences, he placed on his left hand, or deprived of earthly and excluded from heavenly privileges, those who to his law of faith and love had proved disobedient. In other words, separating the members of his heavenly from the earthly church, with which up to this period they had been intermingled, he justified and glorified the one, while he condemned and punished the other. To the one, then, the resurrection of which we have been speaking was a resurrection of life, and to the other a resurrection of damnation or condemnation. See Daniel xii. 1—3; Matt. xxv. 31—46; John v. 21—29.

Simple, inexpressibly simple and perspicuous become many passages of the New Testament, otherwise perplexing and unintelligible, when looked at in the light of the scriptural truths which we have just been insisting on. Matt. xii. 31, 32, for instance, is seen to set before us the twofold punishment which should be endured by the finally impenitent and unbelieving Jews: the punishment of loss of earthly privileges, for speaking against and crucifying the Son of Man; and the punishment of exclusion from heavenly blessings, for rejecting the command to believe in Jesus as the Messiah, issued by the Holy Ghost after our Lord's resurrection and ascension. The former was the sin against the Son of Man, the latter the sin against the Holy Ghost. To those finally unbelieving ones there was no forgiveness, in the age* that then was, or in time; nay more, there was to them no forgiveness during the age* to come, or the mediatorial reign of the Messiah: they were punished with everlasting exclusion from his kingdom.—Again, in John iii. 36,

* Greek, *αιων*, *age*.

the Baptist is represented as saying, *He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.* Here also we have the two punishments of the unbelieving Jews suggested to us: *the wrath of God abideth*, that is, continueth to abide on them in the shape of the loss of earthly privileges, as having been incurred by their crucifixion of the Lord Jesus, and not having been removed by subsequent faith on their part; and they were still further punished by being debarred from *seeing life*, or from entering into the Messiah's heavenly kingdom.—So also was unbelief *the sin unto death.* 1 John v. 16. Every other transgression committed by a Jew was capable of being pardoned; Acts xiii. 38, 39; of course *à fortiori* much more was every other transgression of Gentiles pardonable: but disobeying the command to believe, and persevering in disobedience to it, all other sins were sealed down upon a man's conscience, and nothing remained for him but *a fearful looking for of judgment*, Heb. x. 27, or the undergoing of the *second death*.

SECTION SEVENTH.

EXACT NATURE AND OBJECT OF THE EXPERIMENT MADE UPON MAN THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF THE APOSTOLIC MINISTRY, TO AFFORD A MORE PROFOUND AND STRIKING VIEW OF MAN'S ENMITY TO GOD THAN PREVIOUSLY HAD BEEN DONE AND THAN PREVIOUSLY HAD BEEN POSSIBLE. JEWS DEALT WITH, NOT AS WORSE THAN OTHERS, BUT AS SAMPLES OF WHAT HUMAN NATURE IS IN ALL.

Hitherto, under this head, we have confined ourselves in a great measure to speak of unbelief as exhibited by, and of the punishment of unbelief as affecting certain classes of human beings, Jews and Gentiles, living during the existence

and exercise of the apostolic ministry. This it was incumbent on us to do, if we intended to present a clear and consistent view of the facts with which scripture makes us acquainted. Now, however, it becomes necessary to apply our preceding observations, by turning the attention of our readers towards that which it is the grand object of this present work to establish.

God, I am endeavouring to shew, is, through the medium of a series of experiments made upon the fleshly mind of man, affording opportunities for the bringing out and development of the enmity of that mind to himself.

One of these experiments and consequent exhibitions of enmity we considered in a former division of this work; a second of them, more decided in its nature, as disclosing more clearly and satisfactorily the depths of the opposition subsisting between man and God, we are now considering.

In both cases the experiments were made, not for the sake of displaying merely the characters of those who were more immediately subjected to them, but for the sake of displaying what human nature is wherever it may exist.

Adam as an individual sinned by transgressing the law of prohibition, and was punished with the forfeiture of this present life. We shall very much mistake, however, if we suppose that the purpose of God in bringing about this result was to hold Adam up to view as a singularly erring personage, and as a singular object of detestation: on the contrary, his intention was that in Adam's conduct, as in a mirror, we might contemplate the enmity of mankind as a whole, and of each one of us in particular to himself; and that through the medium of loss of life inflicted upon one, we might be enabled to comprehend the desert of the same punishment by all. To us, then, Adam is presented not as an individual, but as a compend of humanity; and his transgression as indicating not the enmity of one, but the enmity of all.

Just so the Jews, as a nation or body of individuals, transgressed against a law of prohibition in crucifying Jesus of Nazareth, and sinned still more awfully in rejecting the law which commanded them to believe on Jesus glorified; in both crimes having had the concurrence of Gentiles, and on both accounts having been punished: first, by the *forfeiture* of *former* privileges; and secondly, by *exclusion* from *future* ones—Gentile unbelievers having shared with them in this latter form of punishment only. This latter crime of disobeying a divine command displayed man's enmity to God in a more striking point of light, and as having a deeper root in human nature, than his previous violation of laws of prohibition had done. And here again, be it remembered, the Jews and their Gentile cotemporaries are not set before us on their own account merely. They were, if I may employ a mercantile phrase, a *sample* of human nature. God through their instrumentality, as formerly he had done through the instrumentality of Adam, was shewing what the fleshly nature of man is, and what that fleshly nature deserves; nay, through them was affording a more decisive view of both than through Adam he had been able to do. In the fact of excluding unbelieving Jews and Gentiles from heavenly blessings, he was, therefore, not inflicting upon them a punishment peculiar to themselves, but establishing the general principle that *flesh and blood*, or mere human nature, can under no circumstances whatever deserve to *inherit the kingdom of God*. 1 Cor. xv. 50.

Through the second sin committed by Jews and Gentiles in disobeying the second law or law of command, and through the higher punishment of exclusion from heavenly blessings inflicted on them for this offence, we are thus having exhibited to us a higher view of man's enmity to God, and a higher view of the punishment which that enmity deserves, than previously we were capable of taking. We are carried

on a step farther towards the climax both of the enmity of man and of its punishment.

Adam's case, as having established man's inability to refrain from violating a divine law of prohibition, established also the principle of human nature not deserving the everlastingly continued enjoyment of this life and earthly blessings. But it went no farther. Even the Jews, in crucifying Jesus, as violators of a prohibitory law, having incurred no higher punishment than the forfeiture of their earthly church state, merely served to illustrate and confirm the principle which in connexion with the first transgression had already been established.

It was the refusal of the great majority of Jews and Gentiles, who lived during the period of the apostolic ministry, to obey the divine command, which, as it brought to light for the first time a greater depth of enmity to God existing in human nature than had formerly been evinced, also brought to light for the first time a greater punishment awaiting that enmity than had formerly been made manifest. Never until then was it known, or could it be known, that human nature,* formerly deprived of earthly, did not deserve to rise to the possession and enjoyment of heavenly blessings. Indeed the same gospel which *brought life and immortality to light*, 2 Tim. i. 10, as connected with the *obedience of faith* on the part of the divine head and his members, also brought to light exclusion from these blessings as the punishment of unbelief. Matt. xxv. 46, &c. &c. A new and higher revelation was requisite to manifest both. As it was not until human nature had shewn itself unable to abstain from transgressing the

* *Mere human nature.* For the *human nature* of the Son of God had, through its perfect obedience to divine law, whether prohibitory or imperative, been shewn to deserve to rise to the possession of spiritual and heavenly blessings. Rom. viii. 3. Phil. ii. 8, 9. Heb. xii. 1, 2. And yet, let me correct myself. In rising again, our Lord rose not with *human nature*, which, as having perfected in himself, he had upon the cross sacrificed or brought to an end, Rom. viii. 3, but with human nature changed and elevated into, rather superseded by the divine nature. 1 Cor. xv. 45—54.

original prohibition, that God could, in the Old Testament Scriptures, announce as its punishment, *dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return*, Gen. iii. 19, so it was not until human nature had shewn itself unable to obey the higher law of command, the law of faith, that God could, in the New Testament Scriptures, announce as its higher punishment, *flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God ; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption*. 1 Cor. xv. 50.

Not that exactly the same consequences, in all respects, followed the second sin as had followed the first. Adam's transgression involved in sin and death the whole human race without a single exception. Those who shall be changed, as Enoch and Elijah were, shall undergo the stroke of death as truly and effectually, although after a different fashion, as do those who die in the ordinary way. Nay, our Lord himself, although personally the sinless and the undying one, by taking hold of human nature subsequently to the fall, took hold of it loaded with sin and death, and required therefore to *die unto sin once*, Rom. vi. 10, before he could get rid of both. But the second death does not, like the first, attach thus indiscriminately to all. Upon all those certainly it does take hold in whom there are to be found only the principles of human nature. And this because the second sin was, like the first, the sin, not of individuals merely, but of human nature. Upon none however except those who possess only human principles does the second death take hold. Over him who is a partaker of the earnest of the divine nature *it has no power* ; Rev. xx. 6 ; him it cannot by any possibility *hurt*. Ibid. ii. 11. The second sin is unquestionably, like the first sin, the sin not merely of the persons who committed it, but of human nature : for the human race were put into the hands of the earthly church when raised in Christ's resurrection, just as they had been put in the hands of Adam ; and therefore the second death, like the first death, attaches not

merely to the individuals who sinned, but to human beings in general. But with this most important difference between the two cases. When Adam sinned and died all human beings were in him—none having been withdrawn from his sway; and of consequence all were subjected to his fate. *By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that, or in whom, all have sinned.* Rom. v. 12. *In Adam all die.* 1 Cor. xv. 22. But before the Jews and Gentiles as a fleshly church, and as so far risen in Christ, could commit the second sin, Jesus, the second man, had himself obeyed the second law—had died, and had risen again; and had in rising again, by making them specially one with himself glorified as second Abraham, withdrawn from the sway and jurisdiction of the fleshly church all those whom, in his gracious and everlasting purpose, he had constituted members of his heavenly church. Therefore to such the second sin and its consequences could not reach. Adam, the first man, had involved all in his sin and death; Jesus, the second man, as spiritual Abraham, had given to some such a present interest in his divine righteousness and divine life, as exempted them altogether from any sin which might afterwards be committed, and any death which might afterwards be incurred. Hence, although the first and second sins were equally the sins of human nature,—and although the consequences of both attach to mere human nature wherever it is found,—yet, while the first sin committed by Adam and its consequences attach to all human beings, without a single exception,* the second sin committed by unbelieving Jews and Gentiles, the cotemporaries of the Apostles,

* Sin reigned unto the death even of the Son of God. Rom. v. 21. Creature death could not have arrested its reign; but the death of the Creator in flesh did. For death, taking hold of his flesh and blood nature, ran, in him, into the ocean of life, and was there swallowed up. Hence the connexion between *the reign of sin unto death, and the reign of grace, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.* *Ut supra.*

and its consequences only attach to those human beings whom Jesus has not, by his death and resurrection, withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the earthly church, by making them partakers of the divine nature. Upon all, with the exception of the members of the heavenly church, does the *second death*, as the effect of the *second sin*—the sin of human nature, and consequently their sin—take hold.

Thus, then, it happens that a new and additional experiment made by God upon man, in the shape of issuing to the Jews, a single nation of this world, and failing them to Gentiles, a second law or command to believe, with not a threatening of loss, but the promise of the reward of life everlasting annexed to obedience, has been the means of bringing to light a new and additional exhibition of man's enmity to God. Aye, and an exhibition of enmity in a far more aggravated and appalling form than had ever formerly been made. It was man now displayed in the attitude of putting away from him his own mercies; of thrusting aside, as unworthy of his acceptance, the blessings of life everlasting. It was man, whose whole nature is a lie, venturing to call God a liar; it was man, whose whole nature is open or concealed hatred, venturing to charge Him whose very essence is love with being actuated by views and feelings hateful as his own. How awful the exhibition of enmity to God which was involved in unbelief! Formerly, as violating a law of prohibition threatening curses, man had shewn himself unworthy of continuing to live upon earth; now however, as disobeying the command to believe on the name of the son of God, so much more aggravated is his guilt, that he shews himself worthy of being visited with the still more dreadful punishment of everlasting exclusion from the kingdom of heaven.

Absurdly as well as unscripturally do all those writers, preachers, and private individuals speak and reason, who represent Adam's one sin as having deserved, and as having

been visited with a greater punishment than the loss of this present life. Unscripturally, most evidently; for they oppose their own crude fancies to the divine record. Gen. ii. 16, 17; iii. 19. Rom. v. 12; vi. 23. 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22. But also absurdly; for, were their view correct, then is Adam's sin the most aggravated of all sins, and no higher exhibition of man's enmity to God can be conceived of or afforded. The sin of unbelief, or of resisting and rejecting God's law of command to believe on his own Son glorified, committed by the fleshly church of the Jews, and by those Gentiles who concurred with them, is however, according to scripture, a greater sin than that committed by Adam, aye, even a greater sin than that of which the Jews in crucifying Jesus were guilty. Matt. xii. 31, 32. Acts xiii. 38—41. Heb. vi. 4—11. x. 26—39. 1 John v. 9—16. And yet, greater as it confessedly is, if popular theories are to be credited there is no greater punishment in store for it! Adam's sin has already, according to them, exhausted all the penalties which can be inflicted on transgression! Is not this single fact of itself sufficient to expose the innate and incurable absurdity of all such theories?—Should any hesitation on the subject be felt, and farther confutation be required, let it be considered that the Word of God has not only made known to us the punishment inflicted for Adam's sin, but in making us acquainted with the greater guilt contracted by the Jews subsequently to Christ's resurrection, has also made us acquainted with the greater punishment which they incurred. After having shewn the *first death*, consisting in the loss of this present life, to be the punishment of the *first sin*, Gen. iii. 19, it shews the *second death*, or exclusion from the heavenly kingdom, to be the punishment of the *second sin*. Mark xvi. 16. John iii. 36. Acts xxviii. 24—28. Heb. x. 38. xii. 25—27. He who asserts, in opposition to this, that rejection of God's command to believe on his own Son deserved and was visited

by no higher punishment than that which was inflicted upon Adam for his one transgression—who asserts that Adam, having incurred not only death temporal, but also death spiritual and eternal, God had exhausted, in his case, all the penalties which he could inflict on human guilt—must be prepared to settle accounts, not with me, but with God himself. And in addition to his having recklessly come into collision with scripture, he must try to render his theory consistent with itself, if he can.

Persons divinely taught, and therefore reasonable* on this subject, will have no hesitation in subscribing to my statement, that in disobedience to the second divine law, or law of command to believe, there was exhibited a much more awful and aggravated view of the extent of man's enmity to God than Adam's previous violation of the first divine law, or law of prohibition, had afforded; and that therefore in excluding from the heavenly kingdom, as the appropriate punishment of the second sin of unbelief, God visited human guilt with a severer penalty than he had done in depriving Adam and his posterity, for the first transgression, of this present life.

* Knowledge of divine revelation is true and substantial reason. Man's reason is but a shadowy principle, applicable to the shadowy concerns of time and sense. To apply reason to revelation (*true revelation*, I mean,) as a test, is absurd, seeing that it always involves an attempt to try the *substance* by the *shadow*. Not so the trial of *reason* by *Revelation*: that is, of the results of man's mind by the manifestations to us of God's mind. True and substantial reason is then in exercise. Thus in divine things the only reasonable man is, and must be, the divinely-taught man. And he must be reasonable only in proportion to the degree in which he is so taught. See more on this subject in the seventh section of my *Divine Inversion*. As also in my preface to Barclay's *Without faith, without God*.—Has the reader ever looked carefully at Rom. xii. 1?

SECTION EIGHTH.

OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED AND ANSWERED.

Objections to the view which I am at present engaged in enforcing may be propounded. One or two of these I shall advert to.

The first objection which I anticipate is, that the gospel proclamation, or second law, was not merely a command to believe on Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah, accompanied with a promise of life everlasting to all who should comply with it, as I represent it to be, but was also a threatening of punishment to gainsayers. In proof of which Acts xiii. 40, 41, and similar passages of the New Testament Scriptures may be referred to. My answer to this is simple and straightforward. True, the gospel call and command to believe were uniformly accompanied with the menace of judgments to those who should disobey; whether Jews, Acts xiii. 40, 41, or Gentiles, Ibid. xvii. 30, 31, Rom. ii. 9, 10. But such threatenings did not themselves constitute the second law, as gospel or glad tidings. Nay, they were no part of the gospel.

These threatenings took their rise from the fact of all to whose ears the gospel came being already in a state of condemnation, as well as from the fact of the still greater condemnation to which disobedience to the gospel command exposed every one who became guilty of it. All stood condemned in the sight of God already as Adam's descendants; in addition to which the Jews had incurred already a condemnation peculiar to themselves, by rejecting while in flesh and crucifying the Lord of glory. The gospel, then, in addressing human beings, whether Jews or Gentiles, addressed them not merely as capable of incurring a higher condemnation, but as already for previous sins justly con-

demned. While, therefore, the gospel itself properly and exclusively issued from God in the shape of a law of command, promising to the obedient heavenly blessings,—and by this stood distinguished from preceding laws of prohibition, which to the disobedient threatened curses,—coming as it did, not to the righteous, but to persons who were sinful and condemned, it was also and properly attended with warnings of the judgments which those who were spoken to had already incurred, and to the execution of which they were obnoxious. Those who heard it were frequently and affectionately reminded that eventual disobedience to the gospel would leave them exposed, naked and defenceless, to undergo the penalty or penalties which through previous transgressions they had deserved. This, however, was not all. Should human beings reject the message of salvation made known by the apostles,—should they disobey the second law, the law of faith, which these heavenly messengers proclaimed and enforced,—they should both contract greater guilt than either Jew or Gentile had previously done, and incur a heavier condemnation. They should superadd to the guilt of having refused to hear God speaking on earth, the more formidable guilt of rejecting him speaking from heaven; Heb. xii. 25; and should, in addition to their forfeiture of earthly privileges, draw down upon their heads exclusion from heavenly ones. Luke xvi. 1 — 12. Under such circumstances, although the gospel properly was glad tidings of salvation through the Son of God, and nothing else,—belief in which was urged and enforced by a divine law,—how was it possible to proclaim it without adding to it warnings of the consequences which should necessarily attend on disobedience to it? Every human motive to obedience the apostles required to avail themselves of, for God was by them making a second grand experiment upon human nature; and without warnings and threatenings, which are a species of motives eminently calcu-

lated to operate on the fears of mankind, the address to the fleshly mind of man would on their part have been incomplete. Besides, the consequences of unbelief were so awfully momentous, that common justice demanded they should not be inflicted until after due and reiterated intimations of what would be the result of a perseverance in rejecting the gospel had been given. Hence warnings accompanied the apostolic preaching. Acts xiii. 40, 41, &c. But warnings were not of the *essence* of the gospel; indeed, they constituted no part of it. The gospel was glad tidings of salvation from sin and death, through the righteousness and life of the Son of God, to be bestowed on all by whom the law of faith should be complied with. And the warnings and threatenings in question were mere *accidents* of the gospel proclamation,—springing from *the already condemned circumstances* of those to whom it was addressed, and from the additional and more awful condemnation in which rejection of it necessarily involved the perpetrators.

A second objection to be considered is, that the command to believe was not the only law addressed to Jews and Gentiles during the apostolic æra: commands to repent, to love one another, to live in peace, unity, and concord, as well as prohibitions against forsaking the assembling of themselves together, against every species of immorality, and so on, having likewise been enforced on them. True, again. Only, as an objection to my view, it is founded on mistake. Repentance towards God had respect to the laws of prohibition violated, and was therefore the expression of sorrow for previous guilt, just as faith in the Lord Jesus Christ was the act of obedience to the law of command. The two necessarily accompanied one another: he who believed in Jesus as the Messiah, or obeyed the second law, having repented or having undergone a change of mind* with reference to his former

* Μετανοεω.

views and conduct. As to the commands and prohibitions issued to the members of the apostolic churches, they all had regard to these persons as having already obeyed the law of faith, and were a directory to them as to the only way in which the sincerity and operation of their faith could be evinced. Obedience to them was of the nature of evidence that the individual yielding it had previously believed the gospel testimony. *Without faith it was impossible* for any one *to please God*. Heb. xi. 6. Hence obedience to other commands and abstinence from the violation of prohibitions had no value of themselves, but derived all their worth and efficacy from the individuals by whom they were manifested having already obeyed the grand command to believe. See Heb. xi. throughout. Indeed, all ordinary acts of obedience on the part of the members of the apostolic churches, were merely so many acts and expressions of *the obedience of faith*. A man who, under divine influence, had obeyed the gospel law prescribing faith in Jesus, would under the same influence, and as the legitimate result of his faith, *maintain good works for necessary uses*. Titus iii. 14.* Besides, be it recollected, that until the close of the apostolic period, everything wore the appearance of conditionality, every blessing was conditionally promised. Upon *the obedience of faith*, as the offspring of the new birth, depended the individual's obtaining an entrance into the kingdom of heaven. John iii. 3, 5; 1 Peter i. 3—5, 23. Upon the same *obedience of faith*, exhibited in a continued and persevering compliance with every injunction which God by the mouths of his apostles was pleased to enforce on the churches and their members, depended the individuals once introduced being

* See Abraham's faith evincing its existence and strength by a work corresponding to its nature. Gen. xxii. 1—13. With this read Rom. iv. 13—25, and James ii. 14—26. Works justified as evincing the existence of faith, not as performed from mere human motives.

carried through the forty years of probation to the close of the then *conditional* state of things, and being finally put in full and unqualified possession of the *unconditional* state. Heb. iii. 6, 14; vi. 4 — 10; x. 26 — 39: also Ibid. iv. 9 — 11. From this it follows, that so far from the numerous apostolic precepts and prohibitions, with which the epistolary portion of the New Testament abounds, having been laws additional to the command to believe or law of faith, on the contrary all these injunctions, whether to obey or to abstain from disobedience, which by the apostles were issued, were in reality implied and involved in this sole law of faith, and compliance with them were but so many means on the part of the apostolic churches of testifying obedience to it.

So much for objections.

SECTION NINTH.

THE DOCTRINE OF DIVINE INVERSION APPLIED; AND A WARNING AGAINST SUPPOSING THAT WHERE THE OBEDIENCE OF FAITH TOOK PLACE THE PRINCIPLES OF HUMAN NATURE PROMPTED THAT OBEDIENCE PARTICULARLY ENFORCED.

Exhausted the present subject certainly is not; although by the great length to which, from anxiety to be understood, I have drawn out the preceding remarks, I may perchance have well nigh exhausted the patience of my readers.

One circumstance more I cannot help fixing attention on before passing on to other matters, namely, the contrast subsisting between the exact position of the one act of disobedience of *the first man, of the earth, earthy*, and the one act of obedience of *the second man, the Lord from heaven*, viewed in connexion with *the obedience of faith* yielded, through divine grace, by those who thereby became, or rather were

thereby manifested to be members of the heavenly church. It is one of those *divine inversions* which, when brought under notice and observed, tend so finely to illustrate what scripture denominates *the manifold wisdom of God*. Eph. iii. 10.

In the case of Adam, we have exhibited to us, first of all, a state of creature righteousness, consisting negatively in mere abstinence from transgression; a state, however, possessed of no stability, but liable at any moment to be brought to an end, whenever a suitable and sufficiently strong temptation to transgress might be presented. It was very brief, having extended only from the issuing of the divine prohibition, Gen. ii. 16, 17, till the breach of that prohibition, which is recorded Ibid. iii. 6. The act of transgression committed by Adam ended it. Looking at this first period of history and state of things, we perceive that the righteousness of the creature, consisting in nothing more than temporary abstinence from disobedience, stood first in order, and that the one act of disobedience which brought creature righteousness to an end stood second.

In the case of Jesus Christ, and the body of believers whom he associated with himself during the apostolic age, we find matters reversed. When our Lord came into the world, its situation and circumstances were not like those of Adam originally in paradise, righteous: on the contrary, he found a state of unrighteousness existing. Therefore two great obligations were incumbent upon him: first, to remove creature unrighteousness; and secondly, to introduce and establish a state of divine righteousness. This he did, not merely by abstinence from evil, or negative righteousness, Matt. iv. 1—11. but by obedience to the divine law of love, or positive righteousness. Matt. xxii. 37—39. John x. 18. Rom. x. 4. Heb. x. 5—18.* Not satisfied with merely avoiding evil—a line of conduct which, however long persisted in, could

* Psalm xl. 8.

never of itself have ended sin—Jesus' first grand and peculiar act was an act of positive righteousness, performed in obedience to the *commandment which he had received of the Father*. John x. 18. Phil. ii. 8. *He, through the eternal spirit, offered himself a sacrifice without spot to God*. Heb. ix. 14. It was this act of our Lord, and not any preceding one, which ended creature unrighteousness, and established divine righteousness. Therefore, in his case the act of obedience stands first in order, and in the second place, is the state of everlasting righteousness thereby introduced. In Adam's case the state of negative creature righteousness came first, and the act of disobedience in which that state terminated came second; but in Christ's case the act of obedience, whereby the state of creature righteousness was brought to an end, is first, and the state of positive divine righteousness, thereby introduced and established for ever, is second. To speak mathematically, the two acts of the two men—the act of disobedience and the act of obedience—are the means; and the two states, first a righteous one, which the creature ends, and the second an unrighteous one, which the Creator ends by swallowing it up in a state which is divinely and everlastingly righteous, are the extremes. Into this latter state, thus introduced and established, *through the obedience of faith* by the Son of God, Heb. xii. 1, 2, were all who by grace were enabled to yield *the same obedience of faith* to the second law, or law of command, which their divine Saviour had done, themselves introduced likewise. Rom. iii. 21—26. 2 Cor. iv. 13. They had forfeited, through the one act of transgression of Adam, the creature righteousness of their creature head; they were made partakers, through the one act of obedience of the Lord Jesus, of the divine righteousness of their divine head.

Shall I be at all better understood if, varying somewhat my phraseology, I say, that the act of disobedience by which the negative righteousness of Adam, and of the human race in

him, ended, stood last in order, or at the termination of his earthly paradisiacal state ; whereas the act of obedience whereby the positive righteousness of the second Adam, the Son of God, was established for ever, stands first in order, or at the foundation, as it was the commencement, of all those acts of *obedience of faith* which were connected on the part of any with their introduction into and enjoyment of the paradise of God ?

The *obedience of faith*, however, as yielded by the members of the apostolic churches, be it always recollected, was a manifestation, not of the powers of human nature, Isaiah liii. 1, Acts xxviii. 24—28, but of the divine nature. 2 Peter i. 4. Eph. i. 17—ii. 8. Colos. ii. 12. It was the effect upon their minds of the faith displayed by our blessed Lord in the sacrifice of himself. Rom. v. 10. God had for his object to *reconcile* a church *in flesh* to himself by means of Christ's *death*, before *saving* his church *in spirit* by means of Christ's *life*. Ibid. See also Rom. xiii. 11. Phil. ii. 12. In other words, God aimed at producing conformity, on the part of the church, to Christ crucified, Colos. i. 24, before he should conform it to Christ glorified. Phil. i. 19. iii. 10—14. For this purpose, as has been already shewn, when the majority of Jews, to whom uniformly the command to believe was first of all addressed, disobeyed, Gentiles had the gospel offered to their acceptance ; and the requisite number of the church requiring to be reconciled in flesh was made up of both.* Acts xiii. 46, 47. Rom. ii. 28, 29. Gal. iii. 29. Certain persons then, Jews and Gentiles, believed the gospel, and thereby obeyed the law of faith, or second law. Nothing by this fact is proved of the ability of man's nature to obey divine law. It proves merely that God *can do* what man *cannot do*. Matt. xix. 26. Nay, by means of the resistance to the gospel law, offered and persevered in by all those who

* *Query.* May there have been any allusion to this fact in the redemption of the first born by the tribe of Levi, recorded Numbers iii. 40—51 ?

were left to themselves, and to the operation of the principles of human nature merely, we have established to us in a still more striking manner than by the one transgression of Adam, the melancholy fact, that *the mind of flesh is enmity against God; that it is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be.* Rom. viii. 7.

This reminds me that I must hasten to bring this portion of my work to a close.

SECTION TENTH.

A CONDENSED VIEW OF PRECEDING STATEMENTS, AND CONCLUSION.

Human nature we have found, in the persons of those Jews and Gentiles who lived during the apostolic ministry, subjected to a second divine experiment, and, as the consequence, exhibiting a second instance of enmity to God.

In paradise man had shewn himself unable to comply with the divine law of prohibition, threatening a curse; after Christ's resurrection, he shewed himself equally unable to obey the divine law of command, promising blessings. Divine law it thus appears, in whatever shape or form and with whatever circumstances attended it may be propounded to him, man cannot obey: for the lesson taught us is not merely the fact of man's nature not having been on particular occasions subject to God's law, but that there exists in him a deep-rooted principle of opposition to God, which renders subjection to that law on his part an utter impossibility. Rom. viii. 7.

The issuing of the gospel by the apostles, in the form of a law or command to believe in it, to Jews and Gentiles existing in their time, has thus been attended with the

important although painful result of furnishing us with a clearer, a profounder, and a more enlarged view of man's enmity to God, than previous to the resurrection of Christ any were capable of acquiring.

Adam's transgression shews us merely human pride spurning at restraint, and human selfishness dissatisfied with earthly enjoyments: but disobedience to the law enjoining faith in Jesus, and promising everlasting life to the obedient, actually exhibits human beings refusing to gratify their pride when the offer is made to them, on condition of their believing, of becoming sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty; and putting away from them, when held out to their grasp, those very heavenly blessings a desire to possess which prompted the sin by which the earthly paradise was forfeited! Gen. iii. 6.

Probably the most efficient and impressive way of fixing attention on the higher exhibition of enmity to God, which was involved in disobedience to the second law, or command to believe in Jesus as the Messiah, as compared with the exhibition of enmity which was involved in violation of the first law, or prohibition to eat of the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil, is to condense in a few brief statements the substance of the remarks which, in the present portion of this work, have been offered and insisted on.

1. Upon the conduct of a single individual hung suspended the fate of man in Adam's case; upon the conduct of many individuals was it made to depend, in the case of those Jews and Gentiles to whom the gospel proclamation, as a second law, was addressed. Supposing the one individual to have gone astray from accidental circumstances, and not under the influence of principles inherent in and essential to human nature, to a class of individuals was afforded the opportunity of correcting, by their obedience,—

had they been capable of yielding it,—the conclusion to which from preceding disobedience we must otherwise have come.

2. One momentary act of disobedience, incapable of being counteracted or rectified, sufficed, in the case of Adam, to establish man's inability to abstain from violating a divine law of prohibition; forty years were conceded to Jews and Gentiles to exhibit disobedience to the divine law of command, and it was not until the period named had elapsed, that man's inability to obey law issued and imposed in that higher form was regarded as established. The first sin was one act; the second sin consisted of a long-continued series of acts.

3. Jews and Gentiles, to whom the gospel command was addressed, had an amount of knowledge and experience vastly greater than that which Adam had; nay, as implying *the knowledge of good and evil* gained through the fall, vastly greater than any which Adam so long as he continued untempted and innocent could have attained to.

4. The law of command to believe what God says appears, abstractly considered, to be both just and easy, and the promise of everlasting life to those who should obey it inexpressibly gracious. How superior all this to a mere arbitrary prohibition, compliance with which was enforced by the slavish principle of fear. And,

5. Loss of earthly life was the utmost extent of the punishment incurred by the sin of Adam; everlasting exclusion from the heavenly kingdom was the result of the second sin, or disobedience to the law of faith.

Do not these facts, whether taken separately or considered as a whole, manifest an amazing difference between the exhibition of enmity to God on the part of Adam, and that exhibition of it which characterised unbelieving Jews and Gentiles? Difference, however, is but a tame way of

expressing my meaning. Does not enmity to God, displayed on the part of many,—in the commission of many acts,—in opposition to great knowledge and experience,—in trampling under foot heavenly mercies,—and as having incurred as its appropriate penalty everlasting exclusion from God's kingdom, exhibit itself in a vastly more aggravated and malignant form, than did the same enmity as manifested by one,—in one offence,—through great and irremediable ignorance,—with no restraints from offending save only threats, and as having incurred only forfeiture of earthly blessings? Calmly reflecting on these contrasted facts, who can hesitate to say that, as regards the exhibition of enmity to God, violation of the one law of prohibition is never once to be compared with disobedience to the one law of command?

As, then, the Israelites in their journey from Egypt had been made to wander forty years in the wilderness of Arabia, until a then existing generation had passed away, before they entered into Canaan; so were the true Israelites, consisting of believing Jews and Gentiles, in their journey from the mystical Egypt of the Mosaic rites and institutions, Rev. xi. 8, made to continue forty years in the wilderness of a reconciled state, subject to the law of faith, until the whole generation of unbelievers had been cut off, before entering into the heavenly Canaan of a saved state, or that enjoyment of rest from subjection to law in the glorified Messiah, which, from the foundation of the world, had awaited the people of God. Heb. iv. 9. See Psalm xcv. 6—11. Rom. v. 10. Rev. xiv. 13. At the close of these forty years, the second divine experiment upon man was complete. His enmity to God, exhibited in the shape of disobedience to the law of command, was thoroughly manifested. Nothing more, with reference to this point, remained to be done. Besides, divine law, in addition to its having answered the purposes of affording mere man an opportunity to display his enmity to God, had been obeyed

by Christ, and as the law of faith by his people, under the influence of his holy and heavenly spirit. Law, therefore, as fulfilled in every respect, passed away. With the ending of law closed likewise the exercise of the apostolic ministry, as having been subservient to the promulgation and enforcement of the law of faith : in connexion with this event, the church having been elevated into the heavenly and saved state, and the Jews, no longer the favourite church and people of God, having been punished with destruction of their city and temple, and with deprivation of their privileges by the instrumentality of Titus. Expulsion from paradise had followed the sin of Adam : expulsion from their earthly church state and capacity, as well as coming short of a higher state and privileges, followed the sin, the second sin, of the Jews. And thus ended the second, or partly miraculous and partly non-miraculous *αιων*, age or æra of the world.

THIRD GRAND EXHIBITION OF
HUMAN ENMITY.

DENIAL OF DIVINELY REVEALED FACT.

THIRD GRAND EXHIBITION OF HUMAN ENMITY.

EXPERIMENT MADE ON MANKIND IN GENERAL, BY MEANS NOT OF THE IMPOSITION OF DIVINE LAW, BUT OF THE DECLARATION OF DIVINE FACT. RESULT, EXHIBITION OF ENMITY IN THE FORM OF CONSTANT AND DECIDED DENIAL OF THE FACT MADE KNOWN. PUNISHMENT INFLICTED, EVER-LASTING DESTRUCTION OF HUMAN NATURE. PLACE, THE WORLD IN GENERAL. PERIOD, FROM THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM TILL THE END OF TIME. STATE OF THINGS, IN NO RESPECT WHATEVER MIRACULOUS.

SPECIAL PREFACE.

MAN'S enmity to God may be considered either subjectively or objectively ; that is, either as a principle inherent in human nature itself, or as stimulated into activity by exciting causes.

Considered in the latter point of view, or objectively, human enmity, in the experiments already gone over by us, has appeared roused into active exertion by divine law. Rom. v. 20 ; vii. 5, 8. And this presented and enforced in two distinct forms : as a law of prohibition ; as a law of command.

Tried upon the Son of God, in both forms, divine law failed in drawing forth enmity on his part to it. On the contrary, it continued receiving from him, during the days of his flesh, a constant, heartfelt, and perfect obedience. Romans viii. 3.

Divine law had proved the means of rousing enmity to God on the part of mere men. Or considered objectively, in reference to them, it might well be styled enmity itself. Looking at the matter in this light, our Lord by fulfilling divine law in his cross *slew the enmity, taking it* thereby for ever *out of the way*. Eph. ii. 15, 16 ; Col. ii. 14. Rather, in his cross, combined with the ultimate reconciliation to himself of his church in flesh, effected and completed by the apostolic ministry, Rom. v. 10, Col. i. 24, he destroyed the enmity to God which is involved in the issuing of law to human nature, whether the law of commandments contained in ordinances, or the law enjoining faith in himself as the condition of salvation and life everlasting. Law in every form ceased, as having been accomplished, with the passing away of the external, Old Testament, and apostolic period.

No law now remains, unless it be realised principle ; that is, law, if the term may still be permitted, is now God speaking the word and carrying his own word into effect, as he did when he said, *Let there be light, and there was light.* Gen. i. 2. For *he that hath ears to hear, let him hear,* Matt. xiii. 9, Rev. xiii. 9, and every similar passage, is not now God commanding the creature by means of his creature faculties to yield obedience, but is God speaking that word which always of necessity carries with it its own accomplishment. See John xi. 43, 44. xii. 50. xx. 9. Rom. viii. 2. Heb. viii. 8 — 12. The enmity of man considered objectively, or in so far as divine law is concerned, is therefore in the cross of Christ, and still more by the passing away entirely of the conditional system of things, slain. Divine law, as the exciting cause of human enmity, is no more.

In our Lord himself, as having sacrificed his personal human nature on the cross,—a nature pure in itself, although loaded with sins not its own,—the enmity was slain subjectively as well as objectively. The nature which required to obey law, as well as the law which it required to obey, both ended in his death, as they were destroyed by being swallowed up in his resurrection. When this last glorious event took place, the divine nature in him superseded human nature, the subjective of enmity in us ; and love in him superseded law, the objective of enmity to us. As the necessary consequence of this, the church and the world subjectively have the enmity slain in them, by means of the slaying of that enmity in the cross and resurrection of the Son of God being presented objectively to them. John xvii 3. Eph. ii. 17, 18. The earnest of the slaying of the enmity subjectively in the hearts of Christ's chosen ones, for instance, is the result of the divine manifestation to them objectively, while they are upon earth, of its having been slain in him ; just as the fulness of the privilege of the subjective slaying in them of the enmity is

the result of that fulness of the objective manifestation, which stands connected with their thorough conformity to him in body and mind in the heavenly glory. 1 John iii. 2. And the enmity subjectively as well as objectively is in the highest and fullest extent of the term slain, or the serpent's head is thoroughly bruised, Gen. iii. 15, when to the whole human race made ultimately new or subjectively conformed to the divine nature, God in Christ is objectively revealed as what he is, the slayer of all enmity, or the all in all. 1 Cor. xv. 28.

But here the questions arise :—Does the enmity slain in Christ's cross, and in the reconciliation thereby of his earthly church, Rom. v. 10, when presented objectively as a matter of information in the scriptures, imply the slaying of it subjectively in human nature while human nature lasts? Or is the removal out of the way of the objective or exciting cause of enmity, in the shape of the ending of divine law by means of its accomplishment on the cross, John xix. 30, Rom. x. 4, on the other hand the occasion of human nature displaying the existence in itself subjectively of a degree and virulence of enmity to God which in no way, except by the removal of the previously existing objective cause of it, could by any possibility have been brought to light and made manifest?

Perhaps the spiritually enlightened portion of my readers may, by attending to and comprehending these few preliminary remarks and questions, be the better prepared for understanding what follows.

CHAPTER I.

A VIEW OF THE LEADING CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH
DISTINGUISH THE THIRD AND LAST EXPERIMENT
MADE ON MAN FROM THE TWO EXPERIMENTS
WHICH PRECEDE.

SECTION FIRST.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS. QUESTIONS PROPOSED.

MARK now how matters stand, in so far as we have yet proceeded.

First. The whole human race, having been put into Adam's hands, have incurred in him, through his one transgression, or through the medium of enmity to God displayed in its lowest form, loss of this present life.

Secondly. The whole human race, with the exception of such as should believe the gospel, having been put into the hands of the fleshly church as it existed during the forty years of the apostolic ministry, have incurred in it, in consequence of its disobedience to the law of command, and of the higher form of enmity to God thereby manifested, the higher punishment of exclusion from the heavenly kingdom.

Another and an equally correct manner of expressing the same thing is this: human nature, which had in Adam shewn itself to be unworthy to retain even the life that now is, shewed itself, by means of the unbelief of Jews and Gentiles, to be unworthy also to attain to a higher life. That is, the enmity of mankind to God, the existence and

extent of which it is one of God's purposes by means of a series of experiments to evince, after having displayed itself to a certain degree in the transgression of Adam, displayed itself in a vastly superior degree in the opposition to the apostolic message given by unbelieving Jews and Gentiles: the display of enmity in both cases having been punished, and the increase in the degree of enmity in the latter case having been fitly attended with a corresponding increase in the degree of punishment inflicted.

But the experiments of God on man, made with a view to afford man an opportunity of manifesting what he is, and what is the extent of his enmity to God, were not yet complete. One and one only remained. Human beings were capable of displaying the opposition of their minds to God in circumstances totally different from either of the two former; and this to a degree which was never previously either conceivable or possible, and which cannot be surpassed. To this principal and closing experiment the attention of my readers is now to be directed.

What circumstances of difference between the two preceding experiments, and the one by which they were to be succeeded, may be conceived of as possible?

Why certainly,

1. Over and above the trial of a single individual, and of a single class of individuals, it was possible for God to make an experiment upon mankind in general.

2. Over and above a state of almost total ignorance and inexperience, as was that of Adam, and a state of somewhat advanced knowledge and experience, such as Jews and Gentiles at the period of Christ's advent had attained to, it was possible for a divine experiment to be made upon mankind placed in the highest state of knowledge, civilization, and improvement.

3. Over and above the period, perhaps of a single day,

vouchsafed to Adam, and the period of forty years granted to those who were brought into contact with the apostolic ministry, it is possible to conceive of God extending the period allotted for a closing experiment till the end of time.

4. Over and above being subjected to divine laws, whether laws of prohibition or laws of command, it was possible for human beings to be addressed by means of the declaration to them of mere matters of fact; or, it was possible for God to make an experiment upon man, not by imposing upon him conditions which he was required to fulfil, but by informing him that he had bestowed upon him heavenly and divine blessings unconditionally. And,

5. Over and above the punishment of loss of this present life, and exclusion from a higher and future one, it was possible for God to subject man exhibiting enmity in the highest degree to the highest punishment of complete and everlasting destruction.

All these circumstances may be conceived of as possible: the greatest number of persons subjected to the trial,—the greatest knowledge and experience possessed by these,—the greatest length of time allowed them to exhibit their enmity,—their opposition made to divinely revealed facts, and not to laws divinely imposed on them,—and the punishment inflicted, complete, irretrievable, and everlasting destruction. Now has any experiment of the nature alluded to actually taken place?

Yes.

This is the very experiment for which God had by all his preliminary arrangements been preparing us. Its commencement dates from the period of Jerusalem's destruction. It has been going on from the apostolic age until now; and it will continue to be made until time shall be no more.

SECTION SECOND.

THE DISTINGUISHING CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE THIRD EXPERIMENT CONSIDERED, DISCUSSED, AND DEVELOPED. MANKIND IN GENERAL TRIED. GREATER AMOUNT OF KNOWLEDGE THAN FORMERLY POSSESSED. EXPERIMENT CARRIED OUT TO THE GREATEST LENGTH OF DURATION.

A few observations intended to throw light on the actual existence of the five circumstances, the possibility of which has just been contended for, will be the means, I hope, of paving the way for the more ample and detailed explanations which are to follow.

First. The only experiment which remained behoved to be made on mankind in general; for as an individual, and a particular class of individuals, had both been already tried, unless it had been God's purpose that a repetition of either or both of the preceding experiments should take place, to whom except to mankind in general could he address himself? Besides, only by advancing to the largest number possible could his procedure be of the nature of a climax, which it evidently is.

Observe the language which I employ, *mankind in general*. Not *all mankind*. For heathen nations, infants, and idiots, although interested in the result of the experiment as a part of the human family, are incapable of being themselves personally subjected to it. They are interested in the result of the experiment. Analogy shews and explains this. As in Adam's hands, and in the hands of the Jews, the rest of the human family were put in making the two preceding experiments, all having been concluded by the conduct, and interested in the fate of these selected individuals; so to the hands of the very large body of mankind, upon whom the third and last experiment is being made, are the rest of

human beings entrusted, these last being concluded by the conduct and interested in the fate of that very large and continually increasing portion of their number.*

All this is as it should be. What the largest possible number of human beings, placed in every possible variety of states and circumstances, uniformly are and do, it may be fairly, upon the most obvious and approved principles of induction, inferred, the rest, if similarly situated, would be and do likewise. Indeed, if the most advantageously situated as to knowledge and experience are unable to abstain, whenever the opportunity is afforded, from exhibiting enmity to God, can we help arguing, and arguing conclusively, that the less advantageously situated in these respects would be still less able, in the event of an opportunity being afforded to them, to abstain from the exhibition of a similar enmity? And infants, idiots, and heathens,—all to whose ears the gospel testimony has never reached,—are the very persons who are thus less advantageously situated. For all practical purposes, then, an experiment made upon mankind in general is the same as if it were universal: concerning those who never personally oppose the gospel, it being evident that lack of opportunity, not lack of similar dispositions, is the sole cause of their exemption in this particular from personal guilt. Human nature, in addition to its having been tested in Adam and the Jews, and in both cases found wanting, affords even in infants, idiots, and heathens, sufficient indications from time to time of what it is, to satisfy us of what such persons left to themselves would be and do, were it possible for the report of the gospel actually to reach their ears.

Besides, be it remembered that the scheme of revelation,

* It being always remembered, that from the effects of the second and third experiments members of the church are withdrawn: not as to their human nature, for human nature in them is made to undergo the same consequences as in others.

viewed as a whole, is a scheme of grace. If man's enmity to God be brought out more and more, it is that God's love to man may shine forth more and more. If the whole human race be involved in guilt, increasingly manifest by the acts of one, and a few, and a large proportion of their fellow men; it is that through the righteousness of one, and a few, and a large proportion of their fellow men,—a righteousness increasingly manifest,—a new creation of the whole human race in the Son of God may ultimately be effected. The universality of the sway of sin and death is subservient to the contrasted universality of the sway of righteousness and life everlasting.

Upon mankind in general, then, is the third and last divine experiment of which we are now treating made.

Agreeable this is to innumerable prophecies contained in the Old Testament Scriptures, which intimate the approach of a period when the knowledge of God should not be confined to the descendants of Abraham according to the flesh, but extend to men of all nations — should not be confined to the land of Judea, but extend to the whole earth. Psalm xcvi. 2, 3. c. 1, &c. &c. And also to facts divinely revealed in the New Testament: for the middle wall of partition, consisting in the Mosaic law and institutions, which separated Jews from Gentiles, and prevented the extension of religious privileges to the latter, has we know been broken down and taken out of the way by the cross of Christ; every ground of distinction between the one and the other being removed, and both, as respects the gospel, being placed on the same level, in exact accordance with what had been foretold. Eph. ii. 13—18. Compare with Isaiah xl. 3—5.

Farther, this is an experiment the base of which, during the whole period of its continuance, is gradually widening. This becomes obvious when we consider, that although many nations have not hitherto had the gospel sound conveyed to them, and consequently have not hitherto been personally

subjected to the divine trial, yet a gradual extension of information concerning God's word has ever since the apostolic day been going on : nation after nation has had the message of salvation brought near to it ; and it is, as we shall afterwards have occasion to shew, extremely probable, nay, almost matter of certainty, that long before the close of this present system of things, every nation upon the face of the earth shall have had an opportunity of testifying, not as our missionary enthusiasts fancy love to the gospel, but on the contrary the extent of that enmity to it which dwells in and constitutes the most powerful principle of the human breast.

Secondly, we find that this third and last experiment is made upon man, possessed of a range and amount of knowledge vastly greater than what distinguished any previous period of the world ; possessed indeed, as we shall afterwards see, of a range and amount of knowledge which ultimately become the greatest possible.

Man, during the whole course of this experiment,

1. Has all the knowledge which can be gathered from the previous existence and history of the human race. Six thousand preceding years are his instructors. Living now, to adopt Lord Verulam's beautiful idea, not in the infancy but in the old age of the world,—the true antiquity belonging to this last, not to foregoing æras,—he has all the benefit which can accrue from the accumulated wisdom and experience of past generations being poured out at his feet and made his own. This, surely, is to occupy no slender vantage ground.

2. He has all the advantage of a constantly and now a rapidly increasing knowledge and experience of his own. New continents are being discovered and explored,—with new inventions he is every day becoming familiar,—and mind no less than matter is now, as to some of its most extraordinary and unaccountable phenomena, being thrown open

to his inspection. The science of government is better understood, the institutions of society are gradually ameliorating, education is being extended and improved, and the study of philosophy in all its departments is prosecuted with more ardour and more success. Liberality of sentiment on all topics more and more prevails. Above all, commerce, more extensive in its range, more unshackled in its details, and conducted on principles more sound and practical than at any former period, is bringing the nations of the earth into a closer, a kindlier, and a more beneficial intercourse with one another. Man's knowledge during this present æra, in a word, not merely surpasses that possessed by human beings previously, but is progressing rapidly towards a pitch of attainment of which the greatest and most expansive intellects now existing are unable to form the remotest conception.

Such circumstances of themselves place man now on a high pinnacle of knowledge and experience, as compared with what he was in the two preceding æras of which we have already treated. But we should do great injustice to our subject were we to stop here.

The vast extent, and, fleshlily considered, amazing accuracy of man's present religious knowledge, in comparison with what, previous to the resurrection of Christ and destruction of Jerusalem, he was capable of attaining to and possessing, are circumstances which, even more than the great amount of man's present secular knowledge, characterise the third and last æra of the world.

Society now possesses the volume of inspiration complete. Not only, as in the immediately preceding æra, has man the record of the preparations which God was making for the future advent of his own Son, but he has also the inspired account of the Messiah's actual appearance, and of the effects and consequences which immediately attended that event placed before him. The "ample page" of revelation is now

in all its completeness “disclosed” to him. Upon his mind, too, attention to the contents of this book is in a variety of ways enforced. The early instructions of parents and teachers, his everyday intercourse with the world, the institutions of civil society, the forms of religious worship, and the disputes of rival sects and parties continually dinning in his ears, all conspire to induce thought concerning the subject. Over and above which, natural conscience, now vastly more enlightened than in former ages, is more urgent in its claims to be regarded. Thus have human beings in countries called Christian, and especially in Protestant countries, views of religion presented to them, and are they as to the letter rendered familiar with topics, which *kings and righteous men* before Christ’s coming *desired to see and hear, but were not able.* Luke x. 24. And thus is religion now to them a subject more or less of solicitude and attention.

Negative and fleshly, it is true, is all the understanding of the Book of God which the minds of the majority of the human race ever acquire. Positive and spiritual knowledge of its meaning—a privilege which is the gift of God—is restricted to very few. Nevertheless, the knowledge of scripture, such as it is, that is, such as fleshly mind can attain to, is during the present æra general and constantly on the increase. It is embracing a larger and a larger portion of the family of man. It is imbuing man’s mind more and more with correcter fleshly notions of Deity and morals, and is rescuing him more and more from the influence of slavish, superstitious, and degrading principles and practices. If it cannot inspire the fleshly mind with divine knowledge—a thing in its very nature impossible—it is at all events ameliorating and purifying its natural and secular views of things. It is enlarging man’s sphere of vision; it is strengthening his mental capabilities on topics the most profound and abstruse. Wondrous indeed are the effects which divine revelation, even

where no true and spiritual acquaintance with it exists, has produced and is still producing on man. It gradually overthrew Paganism. It introduced a higher tone of morals. It brought the full force of public indignation to bear on some of the grosser forms of vice. It has rendered a shew of benevolent and charitable feeling more common. Human prudence even has been promoted by it. It has stimulated learning and talents to direct their efforts towards biblical translation, biblical research, and biblical criticism. And it has produced defences of revelation, and treatises on the evidences of Christianity, which, without evincing any real knowledge of God on the part of those by whom they were composed, or being calculated to convey any real and spiritual knowledge of God to others, are nevertheless eminently calculated to stop the mouths of professed atheists, and put infidelity to the blush.

Greater thus being man's knowledge both secular and religious, especially the latter, at this present than at any previous æra, greater consequently is the opportunity which he has for the display of his enmity to God.

Responsibility to God is regulated by the degree of religious knowledge. This principle our Lord has strikingly illustrated and enforced, in Luke xii. 47, 48.* But no knowledge of God which fleshly mind formerly could acquire equals that of which it is possessed during this third and last æra of the world. *The least in the kingdom of heaven*, aye, the meanest individual, without a particle of spiritual illumination, to whose ears the history of Christ crucified and glorified has been conveyed, knows more than John the Baptist, and of course still more than the whole host of pre-

* *And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.*

ceding prophets had any conception of. Matt. xi. 11. And is not the responsibility of persons so situated, in consequence of such increased knowledge, itself increased likewise? Most certainly. Hence enmity to God on their part, as it exhibits a deadlier virulence than could be exhibited by mere fleshly mind previously to the close of the Mosaic dispensation, so must it expose them to a more awful fate than could by the transgressions of those who lived before the period in question be merited. If ignorant Adam deserved to die; and if the comparatively uninformed Jews were justly punished with the forfeiture of their Old Testament privileges, as well as with exclusion from the heavenly kingdom; surely still more severe must be the punishment deserved by those who act in opposition to the highest measure of light and knowledge of which fleshly mind is susceptible.

Thirdly. Preceding experiments made by God on man were comparatively brief in their duration. To Adam in paradise it is probable that the time of trial was extremely limited, say a single day, if even so much. To mankind, while the second law, or command to believe, was in operation, a period of forty years was conceded. Short as both these experiments were, the lengthening out of the period of the second seems to point, in order to the perfection of the climax, to the duration of the third and last experiment being much more protracted than was that of either of the two preceding ones.

And so it is.

God began making this last experiment at the close of the apostolic ministry, or about the time of Jerusalem's destruction, in the first century of the Christian æra. Then divine law of every description, whether prohibitory or imperative, ended; and then commenced the proclamation of pure and sovereign grace. Feebly at first was it heard, and by few was it responded to. Amidst the din of rival sects, endea-

vouring in one way or another to perpetuate an external and earthly church, — setting up systems of doctrine and practice resembling the divine system temporarily established by the instrumentality of Moses, and imposing their respective theories in the form of law, to which were attached denunciations of judgments in the event of these theories not being submitted to, — the still small voice of gospel truth and love, announcing that divine law no longer existed, and that the earthly had been superseded by a heavenly system of things, was not likely to attract much regard. Nor did it. A few were privileged to hear the gospel sound; but they were few, exceedingly few, indeed. Scarcely noticed were they among the mass of Judaisers and fleshly religionists. Then followed a long and dreary night of darkness and prostration of intellect: especially of ignorance of gospel truth. The glimpses which we obtain from the page of ecclesiastical history of divine knowledge possessed in every age by a few scattered individuals, — by Paulini, Albigenses, Waldenses, and others, — is not sufficient to dispel the general gloom. At last came the Reformation. The gospel was again openly proclaimed and generally heard; but proclaimed and heard merely to be again overwhelmed under a mass of fleshly interpretations, not merely inconsistent with its nature, but directly opposed to it. Indeed, from the period alluded to, the gospel began to be opposed more systematically, and after a more dangerous, because a more refined fashion, than formerly. Men professed in words to acquiesce in it, who immediately, by their steady and uncompromising resistance to its nature and spirit, shewed themselves to be its deadliest foes. Salvation by grace they professed to glory in; but when examined into, their salvation by grace turned out to depend for its being effectual on the acceptance of the creature, or, in other words, to be salvation by works. Still a few, and blessed be God, however small, an increasing number,

have heard and recognised the heavenly message. To them it has been given to see, that in Jesus *they are saved*—that in him *they have righteousness and life everlasting*. Thus have matters gone on hitherto; and thus will they go on till the end of time. During the remainder of the period of the existence of this present world shall the third experiment upon man continue to be made. His enmity to God was shewn before Jerusalem's destruction, through breaking laws of prohibition and disobeying a law of command; it is now being shewn, and will continue to be shewn, through his resisting, pouring contempt on, and trampling under foot the proclamation of grace. And this, too, shall be the work not of the profane merely, but of the serious, the fleshly pious, and the fleshly religious. Man must be tried completely: as every opportunity was afforded to him of obeying divine law, so must every opportunity be afforded to him of embracing and acquiescing in gospel truth, if he can. Hence, till the end of time is this experiment protracted. But the result will be what it has ever been. By a few,—always as ages roll on more and more numerous, and yet few,—will the fact of eternal life being bestowed freely, being bestowed now, and being bestowed on themselves, be understood and acquiesced in. By the majority, on the other hand, will the gospel be converted into a system of conditionality and law; and will an opposition to its gratuitous and certain enjoyments, more vigorous, more determined, more deadly, the nearer time draws to its close, continue to be made. This opposition having gone on regularly developing itself more and more, and increasing in bitterness and intensity, the end of time shall at last terminate the experiment—terminate, indeed, the series of experiments, as complete.

In this way shall the last experiment made by God on man be the longest in point of duration of the three. It shall reach from the destruction of Jerusalem till the end of time.

Reasons the most valid and substantial might be assigned for this. Among others, the vastly superior importance of this third experiment justifies the vastly longer time allotted for its continuance. God is now going to the very bottom of man's enmity to himself; and he will not stop until in every possible variety of way, by every expedient, and to the very uttermost, that enmity shall have been evinced. It is not enough that God knows the result. It is not enough that the members of the church are enabled to anticipate it. The fact of man's thorough opposition to God must be made incontrovertibly evident to all. Because God has determined that to man shall be left no excuse is the present experiment still carried on, and shall it continue to be carried on.—Not in every form yet has the gospel been brought under man's notice. Not by every inducement yet has he been stimulated to turn his attention towards it. Until these shall be exhausted, it is impossible for the present experiment to terminate. The glad tidings of a salvation which is free, which is present, and which is ours, must be presented under every aspect, and man must have every opportunity of opposing it. The savage and the civilised—the learned and the unlearned—the profane and the religious must all have it set before them, and be permitted to treat it as they list. Pelagian systems, Arminian systems, Calvinistic systems of opposition to the gospel do not yet exhaust the resources of the human mind. Nay, Williams of Rotherham systems, and Fuller systems, and Irving systems, and Campbell of Row systems, and Campbell of America systems, and Wardlaw systems, and Marshall systems, and Morrison and Rutherford systems, which appear to be the most modern and approved fashions of opposing the gospel in this country, do not exhaust man's inventive powers in this respect. The principle of conditionality—the principle of God's bestowment of heavenly blessings upon us depending in some way or other

upon our acceptance of these blessings, and submission to his authority—has not yet evinced its existence and prevalence in human nature in every possible form, and under every possible aspect. New modes of opposing the doctrines of grace, under pretence of honouring them, are yet in embryo. These, human beings must have an opportunity of developing. And they shall have it. The gospel which proclaims God the present and everlasting friend of man, made new and clothed with the divine nature in his own glorified Son, shall continue for ages to come to be the object and butt of man's unhalloed opposition. Only when every mode of resisting it shall by the inventive faculties of man have been exhausted, and when the evidence of man's enmity to it and thereby to God as revealing it shall be complete, shall the end of this world terminate man's displays of his opposition, by terminating the existence of his nature.

SECTION THIRD.

SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED. COMPLETE EXCLUSION OF ALL
CONDITIONALITY FROM THE LAST EXPERIMENT. PUNISH-
MENT IN THE HIGHEST DEGREE INFLICTED.

Fourthly. God's present and last experiment upon man is made in a form entirely different from, might I not rather say entirely opposed to, those experiments which preceded.

However different in many respects a law of prohibition sanctioned by the threatening of punishment, may be from a law of command sanctioned by the promise of reward, still both agree in this, that in both the loss is to be avoided, and the advantage is to be gained, conditionally. Something must be abstained from or performed by the creature, some terms or conditions must be fulfilled by him, in order to his escaping the punishment or attaining to the reward.

All this conditionality of divine procedure towards man is perfectly consistent with human nature, which is necessarily conditional in its whole origin, form, and constitution. Strikingly, then, was man's enmity to God exhibited, first of all, in the two ways of Adam's transgression and the Jews' unbelief; seeing that, as laws of prohibition and command were both adapted to man, in violating divine laws imposed in both forms, human beings were actually violating fundamental principles of their own nature. Laws in both forms, when prescribed by man, men can obey and have obeyed; but when God prescribes such laws, they, under the influence of an overweening necessity, disobey them. How decided the proofs of man's enmity to God thus afforded! Romans viii. 7.

There remained, however, another test to which man might be subjected; and this, since the destruction of Jerusalem, God has had recourse to.

That test was to proclaim and make known, as a matter of fact, that righteousness and life everlasting are, in Christ Jesus as second Adam, man's portion — every man's portion. To proclaim that God is bestowing heavenly blessings upon man unconditionally, or without exacting from man the fulfilment of any terms whatever, in order to entitle him to their enjoyment. God is saying, "Eternal life is my gift to man through Christ Jesus." Rom. vi. 23. This he announces as matter of fact, not requiring even faith in what he says, much less obedience to any law as the condition of possessing it.

Doing this, the structure and constitution of man's mind were even still so far consulted. Every human being of mature age, nay, even a great majority of well instructed children, are capable of understanding what a gift, as contradistinguished from wages, in the ordinary intercourse of mankind with one another, means. A gift is that which is freely

bestowed. To introduce any condition whatever, no matter what, into the enjoyment of it, is to vitiate its gratuitous nature. This every adult comprehends, or may comprehend. As laws of prohibition and command addressed themselves to principles existing in man's nature, so does the gospel declaration that eternal life is God's gift address itself to a principle existing in man's nature likewise. This, then, is God's third experiment, having for its object to solve practically the following query:—Are human beings, by means of mere human principles, capable of understanding what God means, when he declares that heavenly blessings are bestowed by him purely as a gift? Or, is there something in man's nature which disqualifies him for taking this view of things; nay, which constrains him to rise up against it with feelings of the most decided, embittered, and uncompromising hostility?

The result of this experiment, so far as it has gone, has been painfully to corroborate the proofs previously afforded of man's essential enmity to God.

If bodies of men be regarded, scarcely one of them can be pointed to by which salvation has been seen to be God's gift. Should I not rather say, by not a single one of them has the truth as to this matter been recognised. I speak not here of words. Many of them have introduced admissions of the gratuitous nature of heavenly blessings into their standards and formularies; but what of that? Is it not the scope and purpose, nay, is it not the express declaration of such standards, that only on the fulfilment of certain conditions can heavenly blessings be enjoyed? And if so, of what worth and avail are assertions that they are bestowed unconditionally? Some sects, such as the Bereans, and certain classes of Universalists, have made an approximation to a right understanding of the subject; but still *quam longo intervallo!*

Conditionality, alas! is found to pervade the language and ideas of both bodies, when their respective systems are examined into as a whole, however much, when looked at cursorily, they appear to disclaim it. But if even these sects cannot be screened from the charge, other sects and parties actually glory in their making the enjoyment of gospel blessings to be conditional. Gift by them is openly and impudently interpreted to signify that which is conditionally bestowed. A junction with Roman Catholics, and with their copyists the Puseyites, is, in the estimation of the members of these respective bodies, indispensable to salvation. And even where this is not asserted, and more liberal sentiments appear to prevail, still the work of Christ in our behalf is not considered to be of itself sufficient to ensure our salvation. Eternal life bestowed gratuitously through Christ Jesus they spurn from them with disgust. Certain terms must be fulfilled by ourselves, either with or without divine assistance, before we can, according to the authorised dogmas of such bodies, escape from eternal wrath and see God in glory. It matters not to my present statement what the exact conditions insisted on may be: enough for me that some conditions are by the rival and legion-like sects of which I speak considered the *sine queis non*, the indispensable requisites of salvation.

And if individuals be regarded, the case is precisely the same. Except here and there a person taught from above, all concur in maintaining the doctrine of our enjoyment of life everlasting being the result of some condition or conditions performed or to be performed by ourselves. Some hold this in a grosser, some in a more refined form: but however held, salvation by works is the principle universally contended for. From infancy man is imbued with the notion that God's favour hereafter can only be enjoyed by him conditionally. And from the lowest Pelagian up to the

supra-lapsarian Calvinist, we have a scale or gamut of terms of the attainment to life everlasting which require to be fulfilled by us ; beginning at the bottom or bass note, with the necessity of outward abstinence from evil, and running up to the highest and shrillest treble of the necessity of performing the mysterious appropriating act of faith. "Except thou art found complying with the gospel invitation, or the gospel offer, or the gospel call, and except thou art found leading a life consistent with the gospel, thou canst not be saved," is not only language addressed to human beings from vast numbers of pulpits, but is the highest view of the subject which the most enlightened on fleshly principles are capable of addressing to themselves. Listening to such persons, one is apt frequently to wonder if the following passage is to be found existing in their copies of the scriptures: *If salvation be by grace, then is it no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace: but if it be of works, then is it no more grace, otherwise work is no more work.* Rom. xi. 6.

Need I enter on any long or elaborate statements, to prove that all conditional notions of the enjoyment of eternal life, however plausible, and by whatever number of persons distinguished for learning, ability, and apparent piety maintained, are inconsistent with God's divinely revealed fact, and oft-repeated declaration that salvation is his gift?

"I bestow eternal life not according to works of righteousness which men have done, and of course still less according to their works of unrighteousness, but gratuitously," says God himself. "No," say men,—and some of them extremely amiable, and in the estimate of the world eminently pious men too,—"thou dost not so; thy favours are not gratuitous: thou requirest hearers of thy word to obey the command to believe, and thine other commandments and prohibitions, before thou wilt or canst confer divine blessings. Continually art thou enforcing these terms and conditions on

the hearts and consciences of all: supposing the reverse, is to suppose thee to encourage the grossest and vilest anti-nomianism. Wilt thou, by bestowing eternal life freely, confound the wicked with the righteous? That 'be far from thee, Lord!" Thus, like fleshly-affectionate Peter, they hesitate not piously to give God the lie. Matt. xvi. 22. And like Peter, still farther, they stand rebuked for their presumption by him whom they profess to recognise as their master. Ibid. 23.

Why is all this?

No doubt such a uniform conditionalizing of divine declarations of facts springs subordinately from a variety of causes, which it would not be difficult to enumerate. Some of these are, early education, mistaken notions as to the obligatory nature of certain portions of the Mosaic law, ignorance of the command to believe having ceased to be issued by God at the close of the apostolic ministry, confounding of law with grace from never having been taught the distinction between soul and spirit, a zeal for God but not according to knowledge, and so on.

But supremely, and going back at once to the fountain of the evil, conditionalizing views of divine truth spring from man's enmity or opposition to God. That is, from the mind of man standing essentially and in all respects opposed to the mind of God. God's mind, which is good or beneficent, coming into contact with man's mind, which is evil or selfish, what but collision between them can be the result? Matt. xx. 15, Gal. v. 17. What but opposition to God is evinced, whenever the conditional or limited mind of man attempts, agreeably to its own nature, to fasten conditions or limits on him, to whom and to whose nature they are necessarily unknown? Inability to obey God's law, whether of prohibition or command, constituted formerly the indication of man's enmity to God. Inability to apprehend the fact that

eternal life is God's gift, bestowed without any regard to conditions fulfilled or to be fulfilled by the creature, now constitutes the indication, and a far more decided and awful indication, of the existence and extent of that enmity, and of the supremacy which it wields over the whole man.

This becomes clear, if we reflect that enmity to God, evinced in rejecting as untrue God's declarations that he bestows upon us blessings our enjoyment of which is certain whether we believe what he says or not, admits not of a shadow of extenuation or excuse.

When man resisted and broke the law of prohibition, accompanied by a threatening, it might have been pled in his vindication that he could not brook being dealt with as a slave.

When he disobeyed the law of command, promising to him if obedient life everlasting, it might have been alleged that this procedure on the part of God involved such an appeal to mercenary motives as was calculated to revolt a high spirited and ingenuous mind.

What, however, can be said in the way of apology, or even of extenuation, for man's treatment of the divinely announced fact, that salvation is finished, and that eternal life is even now secured to him as his portion? A fact this, whether he believe it or not. There is no law here—there is no threatening here—there is even no promise to be realised at a future period here. The gift of life everlasting by God to man is proclaimed as what actually exists; as a blessing already bestowed; as what the creature enjoys certainly and indefeasibly, in Christ Jesus the Creator and second Adam, in spite of whatever as a descendant of the first Adam, and of whatever personally he may have been, may be, and is. Heavenly blessings, according to the gospel as made known since the days of the apostles, *do actually belong* to the creature; not, *may belong* to him. How clear and unequi-

vocal such a statement! Is not this an exhibition of the very height of generosity on the part of God? The gift itself not earthly, but heavenly blessings; not temporary, but everlasting enjoyments; not improved human nature, but the divine nature. And the conditions. Conditions? There are none. Nothing is required on the part of the creature; all is graciously and gratuitously bestowed by the Creator. Surely, some one may be ready to exclaim, the creature is melted at last by a sense of the Creator's unchanging and everlasting love to him! Surely he acquiesces with joy and gratitude in the possession of heavenly blessings thus totally undeserved by him—thus freely conferred by God! No such thing. This last experiment on God's part ends as all preceding experiments have done; it merely affords occasion for a more decided—the most decided—exhibition on man's part of his enmity to God. Man refuses everlasting life as God's gift. Nay, he absolutely spurns it from him, and flings it in the face of his benefactor. Although neither treated as a slave, nor plied with mercenary motives, his heart is agitated with the most rebellious feelings at the idea of God dealing with him on the footing of a mere dependent on his bounty: rather than receive salvation as of free grace, he will attempt to enter into treaty with God, as if he himself were independent and God's equal; and he hesitates not to impute to the Creator those very mercenary motives which he professed to repel with indignation when imputed to himself. The import of his language and conduct is:—"Unless I can deserve the blessing of life everlasting in some way or other, I will not have it at all. It must be earned by me: by my faith, by my obedience, by my perseverance. It matters not how, but to me it must come as wages. A blessing thus merited by me I could enjoy with zest and satisfaction; but a favour which becomes mine as a pure gift,—which the Creator doles out to me as an alms, and which I am to receive on a footing

of equality with the vilest of mankind, — such a blessing — a curse rather — I reject with contempt and abhorrence.”

Thus does the human mind,—which might be found objecting to God that in the cases of Adam and the Jews he had dealt with man after a slavish and mercenary fashion, by imposing on him laws of prohibition and command, and annexing to non-compliance or compliance with these, punishments or rewards,—actually set up and impose on itself laws of its own devising, compliance with which it regards as indispensable to salvation, and violation of which it accounts as sufficient to justify God in excluding from life everlasting; the whole being done in direct opposition to God’s declaring over and over again that he imposes no law, that he exacts no condition of salvation: on the contrary, that he bestows heavenly blessings freely. What is this but, besides carrying out its enmity to God to the highest possible degree, to shew that creature mind is only capable of being dealt with on the footing and through the medium of law? and to justify God in having so dealt with it on previous occasions? So wedded indeed is man’s mind to law, although totally unable to obey it when proceeding from God, Rom. viii. 7, that where law is not and cannot be—where all is of grace—where God is merely communicating to the creature information as to what he (God) is, and what he bestows upon him, exacting nothing from the creature by means of laws in return—rather than view matters as God represents them, and enjoy the comfort which would thence necessarily result, creature mind will conjure up and impose on itself laws of its own; and after representing them as being imposed by God, deem obedience to them necessary in order to the enjoyment of life everlasting! That which was never subject to God’s laws, and indeed never could be so, thus voluntarily subjecting itself to laws emanating from itself; and that which could not obtain salvation through *divine* laws, thus hoping to procure it through *human* ones!

Is not contempt for God, is not blasphemy, and is not idolatry of the worst description — self-idolatry — manifest in the whole procedure? And is it possible for the human mind to carry out its enmity to God further?

Strange infatuation of man! And yet not more strange than true! Eternal life, when revealed by God as his gift, rejected by the creature; and instead of, and in opposition to God's declarations of the freeness, the certainty, and the universality of his grace, a preference given by the creature to a salvation which is conditional, and *doubtful*, and limited: a salvation which has no existence except in his own brain, and which is to be earned by expedients, and by a compliance with conditions which he himself, not God, has imposed! Well; as man cannot earn eternal life by his obedience, and as he will not receive it when God declares that it is his, he gives the finishing stroke to his enmity in thus acting.

“The force of nature can no farther go.”

Fifthly. In strict and inseparable connexion with the highest exhibition of man's enmity to God stands the highest degree of punishment to which human nature is capable of being subjected.

It had already been deprived of its present existence; and it had come short of the heavenly kingdom: what only remained was to shew, that once dead, it was undeserving of being restored to existence; rather, that its only desert was to be finally and everlastingly destroyed.

The carrying into effect and infliction of this last and greatest penalty is on the ground and through the medium of man setting himself in determined and uncompromising hostility to God's declaration, that heavenly and eternal life is his gift, being secured to and bestowed on all in Christ Jesus, the Son of his love. Opposition to divinely declared fact is visited with the complete destruction of the nature from which this opposition emanates.

Justly and appropriately is destruction the punishment of man's conditional views and notions concerning God ; and of his opposing these to the representations of His own unconditional character, and the unconditional principles on which He bestows heavenly blessings, which God himself vouchsafes. For,

1. It is inflicted in exact agreement with the sentence which man, under the influence of fleshly mind, pronounces on himself. According to man's faith in this, as in other respects, is it done unto him. Man conceives and asserts that only the constant and unremitting exercise of virtue and benevolence can entitle him to heaven. Or that works combined with faith must save him. Or that the embracing of Christ, by an act of faith on his part, is requisite to his salvation. Or that some other condition—it matters not what—must be fulfilled by him before he can acquire a right to the enjoyment of the blessing. Well ; God, in great condescension, is so far pleased, as it were, to ratify man's own judgment. "Fulfil the self-imposed condition—for remember that I impose none—and then, but not till then, we shall speak of the reward." Where, however, are the perfect virtue and benevolence, even man's own conscience being judge ? See Matt. xix. 16—22. Where the faith combined with works *really* good ? That is, combined with not merely abstinence from evil, but the positive performance incessantly and from the heart of deeds of mercy and love ? Where faith ? Not rational conviction, but a principle which is heavenly and divine ? Where the performance of any other supposed condition ? The gospel, be it observed, is in every case rejected where a condition, or where conditions of life everlasting are set up. Is rejected in every one of the supposed cases, however pious in the estimation of themselves and their followers those who pursue such a course may be. And God is supposed to condescend to reason the matter with such persons on their own principles. Where, as if God said, is the divine standard of excellence

acted up to? Nay, where—to take up the opposer of the gospel upon infinitely lower ground—where is his own self-imposed standard of excellence acted up to? Ah! there are sad misgivings within. Divine light, thrown even after a fleshly form into the natural conscience, checks its boastings and forwardness; nay, irresistibly introduces into it the sense of guilt and condemnation. “I dare not plead with perfect certainty that I have fulfilled my own self-imposed condition,” is the secret language of every awakened fleshly mind to which the appeal is made. And what then says God? What says he to whom the secrets of all hearts are known? “Out of thine own mouth, wicked creature, I condemn thee. Thou hast most impudently, in opposition to my declarations that there is no such standard, set up a standard of the obedience which the creature must yield before he can acquire a right to heavenly blessings; and this standard thine own heart tells thee thou hast come short of. Thou hast judged that those only who perform a certain condition or certain conditions, are worthy of eternal life. All others deserve, according to thee, to be destroyed. Conscience, then, in suggesting to thee that thou thyself art criminal, in so far as thou hast not fulfilled thine own self-imposed conditions, suggests to thee thine own condemnation. *Thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest, doest the same things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and dost the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?* Rom. ii. 1, 3. The punishment which thine own conscience awards to thee, I award to thee likewise. Thou art *punished*, as a descendant of Adam and partaker of human nature, *with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.*” 2 Thes. i. 9.

2. Destruction is suitably visited on a nature which, by its

incapability of living by grace, shews itself to be incapable of living in heaven and for ever. Human nature is a nature of conditions, and consequently is a nature of limitation. As such it is only fitted to exist in a state conditional and limited like the present. The divine nature, on the other hand, is unconditional and unlimited. Rather, to speak more accurately, conditions and limitation, as implying subjection to a power higher than itself, are incompatible with, because opposed to, a nature the very essence of which consists in having all persons and things subjected to itself. And corresponding to this nature is the heavenly state of things, in connexion with which alone it exists. Taking along with us these facts, how then stands the matter? To a mind conditional and limited, and capable therefore of understanding and receiving only that which is conditional and limited like itself, is proposed in the gospel, as declared since the days of the apostles, a view of God as unconditional and unlimited, manifested in his bestowing on creatures the divine nature in himself, independently altogether of any terms performed or to be performed by them in order to render themselves worthy of it. In other words, they are informed that God gives eternal life to men as a matter of fact; and that he exacts from them no conditions whatever of their enjoying it. The result under such circumstances is inability on the part of creature mind to adopt and acquiesce in such a view. Human mind cannot embrace divine mind; the conditional cannot take hold of the unconditional. 1 Cor. ii. 14—16. Could it do so, then might the shadow seize on the substance—the creature on the Creator. Besides, as the development of the unconditional and the unlimited is necessarily at the expense of that which is conditional and limited,—the latter being necessarily absorbed thereby in the former, as shadow in substance,—were the mind of man capable of receiving, acquiescing, and delighting in the mind and nature of God, (which it is not,)

then should we be presented with the strange and unaccountable spectacle of the nature of man, whose essential characteristic is *selfishness*, exhibiting the height of *generosity* by receiving, acquiescing, and delighting in that which is necessarily its own destroyer ! This is of course impossible. Our Lord's reasonings with the Pharisees, recorded Matt. xii. 24 — 26, are here most pointedly applicable.—But man is not merely passive in this matter. Not merely is he unable to receive the gospel, he also actively and zealously opposes it. It is to him, indeed, the object of intense and overwhelming hatred. A view of God as subject to no conditions of existence whatever, but subjecting all conditions of existence to himself, evinced in his declaring eternal life to be bestowed and enjoyed freely, stirs up from the very bottom all the elements of opposition to God existing in the human mind. And no wonder. The doctrine of a salvation which is in the fullest and most unqualified sense of the term free, that is, unfettered by any conditions whatever, shocks every principle of man's nature. It outrages his understanding—it revolts his feelings—it stands opposed to his most dearly cherished prospects. What does he delight in more than the idea of this human nature of his being perpetuated throughout everlasting ages ? And what idea is more directly and more annoyingly assailed by the scriptural gospel ? Human nature, after having been purified and perfected, was in the cross of Jesus destroyed ; human nature was, in the resurrection and ascension of Jesus, changed into, superseded by, and swallowed up in the divine nature. And what happened to man's nature in the Creator himself, is also its lot in the creature : the latter as clothed with the divine nature being ultimately in all respects conformed to the second Adam the Creator, just as previously, by being clothed with human nature, he had been conformed in all respects to the first Adam the creature. The corruptible, by having

the incorruptible put upon it—the mortal, by having the immortal put upon it—is thus swallowed up. 1 Cor. xv. 54. Man's fondest hopes of carrying human nature with him into heaven, and possessing it throughout eternal ages, are thus blown to the winds. Ibid. 50. What other result can take place, on the presentation to man of a view thus opposed to his strongest desires and prejudices, than determined and uncompromising opposition to it on his part? He hates, he loathes, he tramples under foot the doctrine of a freely bestowed salvation. Well, connected with this highest manifestation of enmity to God on the part of the creature is the highest punishment of which human nature is susceptible. The enmity or hatred, since the days of the apostles, coming out in opposition to God as unconditional and unlimited, the punishment inflicted is appropriately enough the unconditional and unlimited nature of God taking hold of and thereby superseding the conditional and limited nature of man. Existing as human nature does only in connexion with a state of things which is conditional and limited,—and this very conditionality and limitation constituting its enmity to the divine nature,—its just and appropriate punishment is for the divine nature to bring to an end and supersede these very qualities of conditionality and limitation in which its enmity consists. But to supersede these qualities is to supersede human nature itself, for they are essential to human nature; and to supersede human nature is to destroy it, for that which is done away with and brought to an end by being swallowed up in something else is of course destroyed. Thus do we arrive at our conclusion, namely, that the everlasting punishment of human nature, by its being everlastingly destroyed, is the just and appropriate penalty of its rejecting the gospel. Human nature setting itself in opposition to a divine testimony—not to a command to believe, or to any other law whatever, but to a simple announce-

ment by God himself of eternal life being enjoyed in Christ Jesus freely, and therefore certainly, presently, and universally—evinced in this the essential and necessary opposition of a nature conditional and limited to the unconditional and unlimited nature of God, is suitably punished by that unconditional and unlimited nature swallowing it up in itself, and thereby obliterating it from the universe.*

This is truly and scripturally the highest punishment to which man's nature is subjected or can be subjected. *Everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord.* Not, as has been erroneously supposed, the revival of man as a human being, and his subjection to everlasting torments; a doctrine which, besides its other inconsistencies and incongruities, lands us in one or other of the two following conclusions: either that a nature which is fitted only to live in time, or in circumstances conditional and limited like itself, may nevertheless have conferred upon it, with a view to its endurance of sufferings, eternal, that is, unconditional and unlimited existence! or, that a nature qualified to live for ever, but totally different from the one that sinned,—which must be the glorified nature of Christ, for the only two natures connected with man which are spoken of in scripture are the earthly nature of Adam and the heavenly nature of Christ Jesus, 1 Cor. xv. 45 — 54,—is to be the subject of the supposed torments!—According to the one theory, while it is the nature of man as limited that sins, it is the nature of man as unlimited that is punished. But query, how can an unlimited nature be man's nature? and if the unlimited nature be punished for transgressions committed by a nature that is limited, wherein appears the equity of punishing one

* Hints as to the essential opposition of the evil or limited and selfish nature of man to the good or unlimited and generous nature of God, and of the manner in which God deals with man's nature, will be found contained in Matt. xx. 1 — 16, Acts xx. 35, Rom. xii. 20, 21, as well as in passages often referred to by me. 1 Cor. xv. 50—54. 2 Cor. v. 4, &c.

nature for offences committed by another? — According to the other theory, although it is the human or limited nature of man that commits the offences, it is the divine or unlimited nature of the Son of God that is everlastingly tormented on account of them? Does such an idea require confutation? — God's word, be it observed, is responsible for no such crudities as these. It carries on man's exhibitions of the enmity of his nature to God, and of the punishments which on account of these he has merited and is subjected to, from the lowest to the highest degrees of both: the nature of man which, as violating the law of prohibition, had shewn itself unworthy to continue living on earth, and which, as disobeying the law of command, had shewn itself unworthy to enter into the heavenly kingdom, being, last of all, by its malignant and persevering opposition to God's declarations that he has, irrespective of any conditions to be performed by man, freely bestowed on him eternal life, shewn to merit, as its highest and greatest punishment, to be everlastingly destroyed, by being swallowed up in the glorified nature of the Son of God.

Before closing this brief and hasty sketch of the distinctions subsisting between this third and present æra of man's existence and the two æras which preceded, I may be permitted to observe, that whereas formerly miracles, or miraculous interpositions of divine powers existed, no miracle has since the apostolic age been performed, and no miracle will to the end of time be performed. God is working incessantly; his providence, in the minutest as well as in the most important events, being visible to the eyes of the members of his church: but he always works according to ordinary and established rules, never in any case whatever deviating from these.

CHAPTER II.

EXACT NATURE OF THE THIRD EXPERIMENT MADE BY GOD ON MAN, AND EXACT NATURE OF MAN'S THIRD EXHIBITION OF ENMITY TO GOD. SALVATION AND ETERNAL LIFE DECLARED BY GOD TO BE BESTOWED BY HIM NOW, FREELY, AND ON ALL, AND THIS AS MATTER OF FACT: ALL GOD'S DECLARATIONS TO THIS EFFECT DENIED BY MAN, WHO MAINTAINS, IN OPPOSITION TO GOD, THAT HEAVENLY BLESSINGS MUST BE FUTURE, CAN ONLY BE BESTOWED CONDITIONALLY AND CONTINGENTLY, AND ARE LIMITED TO A CERTAIN PORTION OF THE HUMAN RACE.

SECTION FIRST.

THE MIRACULOUS STATE AND CONSTITUTION OF THINGS WHICH EXISTED DURING THE APOSTOLIC PERIOD HAVING PASSED AWAY, DIVINE LAW, AS ADDRESSED TO MERE CREATURE MIND, HAS PASSED AWAY LIKEWISE. GOD NOW APPEARS REVEALING FACTS. THAT IS, GOSPEL NOW IS NOT A LAW WHICH MAN IS COMMANDED TO OBEY, BUT IS SIMPLY A REVELATION BY GOD OF FACTS CONCERNING HIMSELF, THE KNOWLEDGE OF WHICH AS DIVINE BY MAN IS IN HIM THE EARNEST OF LIFE EVERLASTING. GOD UTTERS THESE FACTS, LEAVING THEM TO THEMSELVES AND THEREFORE WITHOUT BEING

UNDERSTOOD, IN THE HEARING OF THE MAJORITY OF THOSE TO WHOSE EARS THEY COME; AND THE SAME FACTS, NOTHING MORE AND NOTHING LESS, HE UTTERS SO AS TO MAKE HIMSELF UNDERSTOOD, BY OPENING THEIR EYES AND THEIR EARS, TO THE MEMBERS OF HIS HEAVENLY CHURCH.

MIRACLES passed away and prophecies ceased at the period of Jerusalem's destruction.* For the system of Judaism, with the fate of which miracles and prophecy had been bound up and inseparably connected, was then overthrown; and the system of Christianity, then freed from its previous earthly and Jewish incumbrances, began in its spiritual nature and character to be developed. This took place in agreement with the whole scope of prophecy, which had predicted the fact of new heavens and a new earth, or a new system of things, superseding the old; Isaiah lxv. 17; and as the time

* That all the books of the New Testament, and the Revelation of John among the rest, were written previously to the destruction of Jerusalem, I entertain not the shadow of a doubt. Even *à priori* it is evident to me that, with the ending of the miraculously supported system of Judaism, everything miraculous must have ended: *à posteriori*, however, the same thing has been established by the learning and industry of many able men. Not that I pledge myself to the adoption of all that has been said in relation to this subject. For instance, I reject unhesitatingly the notion so plausibly contended for by Dr. Tilloch, respecting the Book of Revelation having been written at a period anterior to that of many if not all the Epistles, and being referred to by name in some of them; inasmuch as I am satisfied that it was the last composed of the various parts of the New Testament canon. But a perusal of the productions of Sir Isaac Newton, Bishop Newton, Dr. Lardner, &c., along with Dr. Tilloch's work, has shewn me the utter groundlessness of the views of those who would bring down the composition of any inspired writing beyond the year 70. As to miracles, he who would wish to see convincingly exposed the absurdity of supposing their existence to have reached to the second century, much more to the third or fourth centuries, may consult with profit Conyers Middleton's treatise on the subject, or Dr. Jortin's *Ecclesiastical History*. Many very valuable statements as to this point have emanated at different times from Messrs. Wilkinson, Stark, &c., Devonshire, and their Salemite brethren.

of its fulfilment approached, had explained what was meant, by shewing that it was to be accomplished in the fact of the temporary existence and prevalence of miracles being superseded by the everlasting existence and reign of love. 1 Cor. xiii. 8 — 11. Such was the way in which the third and last period of the world was to be ushered in, and the third and last experiment by God on man was to be made. It was the deprivation of the miraculously selected and miraculously supported nation of their peculiar and theocratic privileges—it was the passing away of all that was miraculous and prophetic with the downfall of their divinely constituted commonwealth, which, as we endeavoured to shew in our last chapter, threw open the world in general as the new field for God's operations,—enlarged indefinitely the boundaries of human knowledge,—imposed no term for God's last experiment save the end of time itself,—brought to an end with the law of command divine law of every description,—and left God to punish man's enmity to himself to the full extent of its deserts, without being fettered by obligations contracted to individuals or communities, and without requiring to wait for any specified contingency. At the revolution necessarily implied in the cessation of miracles and prophecy, popular theology winks hard; either not seeing it, or what is more likely, pretending not to see it. Fain would it, as is done impudently by the Church of Rome, claim an existence for miracles and prophecy still. But when unable to persuade to the swallowing down of so gross and glaring a falsehood, fain would it induce its votaries to fancy, that the passing away of miracles and prophecy has been productive of no material difference between the state of things which existed in the apostles' days, and that which has succeeded; that uninspired clergy, whether episcopally ordained or not, are the legitimate successors of the inspired apostles, qualified to perform the works which they did, and entitled to the respect and

reverence which they had ; that bodies of individuals, brought together by the kings of the earth, or choosing to associate voluntarily for religious purposes, are on a footing of equality with churches gathered by the King of Zion, nourished by his truth, and endowed by him with heavenly and supernatural gifts ; and that sermons and other compositions on the subject of religion emanating from the brain and folly of man, however much they may oppose the gospel, are to be listened to as the word of God, or as capable of throwing light on that word ! Nay, that offers of salvation made by humanly educated clergymen are the same as the law of faith enforced by the divinely constituted ambassadors of Jehovah ! They would fain have us to believe that institutions which can claim no higher than a human origin are the same as institutions which God himself set up, supported, and vindicated !—Pardon us, dear friends. Time was when you imposed on us as you are now imposing upon others. But the film has at last fallen from our eyes. Rather, God himself has freed us from the reign of error, by causing his own word to shine into and take possession of our minds. We now see, that, at the period of Jerusalem's destruction, God proceeded to carry matters not backwards but forwards. Not after having commissioned and employed inspired apostles, did he go back to commission and employ uninspired men. Not after having himself set up, for specific purposes, earthly churches, and having disclosed their inherent worthlessness, 1 Cor. iii. 1—4, v. throughout, vi. 1—8, xv. 34, &c. &c., did he go back to solicit the assistance of his creatures in setting up earthly churches purer and more spiritual than his own. Not after having issued laws of prohibition and command himself, and shewn that all such laws were necessarily weak through the flesh, Rom. viii. 3, did he go back to try if, by investing mere creatures with authority to issue laws in his name, he could mend the matter. No, no. God after

having disposed of, by bringing to an end, the earthly state of his church, as having fully answered his purposes, is now carrying matters forward, by manifesting a state of his church which is heavenly and everlasting. After having in previous periods afforded men opportunities of testifying their enmity to himself, through their opposition to a state of things which was inferior and earthly, he is not now going back and stultifying himself, by accepting of their tokens of opposition to him, as if they were marks of submission and attachment; but he is going forward, and by disclosing a state of things which is superior and heavenly, he is affording men, by means of that earthly system which they are struggling to perpetuate,—by means of that earthly priesthood, these earthly churches, and that earthly and conditional gospel, which they would fain persuade us are the priesthood, churches, and gospel of Christ,—opportunities of manifesting the depth, the intensity, and, by any human expedients, the utterly invincible nature of the enmity to himself which dwells in their bosoms.

This being premised, I go on.

Between the second experiment made by God on man, which we considered in the immediately preceding part of this work, and the third and last experiment of which man is the subject, which is that to which our attention is now devoted, the distinction is, that in the former God was enforcing reconciliation through obedience to the law of command, 2 Cor. v. 20; whereas in the latter he is proclaiming salvation as complete in himself, and as a blessing enjoyed by man irrespective of any condition or conditions performed or to be performed by him,—apart from law and from obedience to law, whether of prohibition or command, altogether. Rom. vi. 23, 1 John v. 11. In order to be reconciled, man behoved to yield the obedience of faith; whereas salvation is made known to him as a blessing of

which in Christ he is now and for ever, as a matter of fact, put in possession.


This being the case, to enjoin upon man any condition whatever, it matters not what, as requisite to be fulfilled by him in order to his personal enjoyment of salvation, would be inconsistent with and stand opposed to the nature of the blessing. It would be to confound the second state of things, in which faith was prescribed as a law, with the present state of things, in which no divine law exists or can exist. It would be to render that conditional which is enjoyed by the creature independently of the performance of conditions altogether. It would be to represent salvation, not as complete and as even now possessed by the creature in the Creator, but as wages which the creature himself is, by some act of his own, and at some future and indefinite period, to earn. It would be, in a word, to represent salvation, in opposition to scripture, to be in part or in whole the creature's act; and consequently, the creature to be his own saviour.

Here it is that almost all, if not all the sects commonly denominated evangelical, (I speak not of the others, for their opposition to the truth is glaringly manifest,) are found to err egregiously. They all concur in saying, in so many words, that eternal life is the gift of God; but when they come to explain themselves, they all equally concur in betraying their ignorance of the meaning of the language which they employ. Notwithstanding the difference* between the fleshly Israel's state, and the purposes which God was, by means of the command to believe, in its case effecting on the one hand, and the spiritual Israel's state, and the purposes which God is, by means of his making known to its members that they are saved, in its case effecting on the other hand—notwithstanding the difference* between the temporary state and privileges of

* Rather, the *opposition*.

the former, and the everlasting state and privileges of the latter,—the sects in question are constantly and necessarily mixing up the one with the other. They seem not to have the remotest suspicion that the second or Jewish state of things, which was connected with the second experiment, has passed away, having been superseded by the state of things and experiment which now exist and are now in operation. The law of faith, which ended with the destruction of Jerusalem, is still supposed by them to be obligatory. Reconciliation which, as having been perfected, then gave place to salvation, is supposed by them to be, as in the apostolic age, the object which God still aims at. The external church, or church in flesh, which, as reconciled, then passed away,—having been superseded by the internal church, or church in spirit, then brought into the enjoyment of the privileges of salvation,—they suppose to be still in existence. To sum up all in a few words: that a conditional state of things, in as far as the manifestation of himself on the part of God is concerned, is now entirely out of the question, they never seem so much as to have dreamed of. Salvation is not in their apprehension complete. On the contrary, it remains with the creature to render it complete to himself personally,* or the reverse. Thus is the doctrine of grace—of salvation freely bestowed—turned by them into a law of works. And thus are creatures, after having been tantalized with declarations of eternal life being the gift of God, called upon, if they ever expect to possess and enjoy it, to earn it each one for himself, as the wages of his faith, love, and self-denied obedience. Acknowledging the

* And to others. Hence the efforts of Christian (?) missionaries to help God to ameliorate that nature, which God declares to be essentially enmity against him, and destined to destruction; and to render that earth a paradise, which God declares to be accursed, and destined to be burnt up. *Great is Diana of the Ephesians!* And yet such men condemn idolatry and idolators! Who hath required the offering of this strange fire at your hands? You surely will not tell me that you are God's ambassadors. *Paul I know, and Cephas I know; but who are ye?*

truth of the gratuitous nature of heavenly blessings frequently in general terms, no sooner do these men come to explain themselves, than they are thus found uniformly to deny it. 

It mends not the matter for such people to tell us, as some of them do, that "all have sin taken away and pardoned through the efficacy of the death or cross of Christ; God in bestowing this blessing of pardon acting quite unconditionally, or without any reference whatever to compliance with law or fulfilment of conditions on the part of the creature: whereas salvation, which results from the resurrection of Christ, is a blessing the enjoyment of which is conditional, or dependent on each individual to whose ears it may be brought home believing it to be true." For except that, correctly enough, salvation is ascribed to the resurrection of Christ, Rom. v. 10, the rest of the statement is a tissue of the grossest blunders. First. This system, by making salvation or the enjoyment of eternal life to depend on believing, confounds the second state of things, in which the obedience of faith was the condition of receiving, with this third and present state, in which God prescribes nothing but bestows everything. It represents salvation to be of works, not of grace. It renders it future, not present. It is still a prize to be aimed at, Phil. iii. 12—14, not a privilege already conferred and enjoyed. Heb. viii. 8—12. 1 John v. 11. Secondly. This system actually ascribes a greater power to Jesus' death than it does to his life. For it ascribes to his death, or to a work performed by him in his earthly and inferior state, the power of bestowing a blessing *unconditionally*, while it ascribes merely to his life, which is connected with his heavenly and superior state, the power of bestowing blessings *conditionally*! It ascribes to his death an efficacy which extends to *every human being*, while it restricts the efficacy of his life to *a portion of the human race* only! — Such is human theology, when, in the plenitude of its ignorance and hatred of eternal life as gratuitously bestowed, it

would, by way of a little variety in its freaks, try upon human principles to impart consistency to the statements of Calvinists respecting the atonement. The first step made by the coxcombs who maintain the view upon which we are at present animadverting is to run their heads against the scriptures, and to plunge over head and ears into the grossest inconsistencies. In making the benefit of Christ's death to be unconditional and that of his life conditional, they exactly reverse the truth of matters : making that unconditional, which, in a certain and most important sense, was earned on the part of the Son of God in flesh by the fulfilment of all conditions ; and that conditional, with which, as heavenly and spiritual and connected with the everlasting life of the Son of God, conditions have and can have nothing whatever to do. Besides, let me dwell upon the startling, the damning fact, that such persons ascribe unhesitatingly a greater efficacy to the death of Christ than they do to his life. " Although it is certain that we, in common with the whole human race, are, apart from every act and every species of merit of our own, pardoned and reconciled by the death of Christ, it by no means necessarily follows that we shall be saved by his life, inasmuch as fulfilment of the condition of believing on our part is requisite to our enjoyment of this latter blessing," say fleshly religionists of the class to whom we are at present alluding. Opposite entirely is the style of reasoning adopted by men who had the mind of Christ. *If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, (observe, not much less, as popular theology in one of its vagaries would now interpret the passage,) much more, being reconciled, we shall be, as a matter of absolute certainty, saved by his life.* Rom. v. 10.*

* If great be the power of Christ's death, much greater must be the power of Christ's life. This is apostolic reasoning. Therefore if the former could reconcile conditionally on performing the obedience of faith, much more must

The matter, then, stands thus:—

God has for eighteen hundred years been declaring, in his written testimony, that all mankind are saved with an everlasting salvation in his well-beloved Son. 1 Tim. iv. 10. And that in consequence of this, eternal life in him is their free, assured, and indefeasible possession. 1 Cor. xv. 22. There are no *ifs*, or *buts*, or *may bes* in the case. No conditions remain to be fulfilled; upon no future contingencies does the blessing depend. Phil. ii. 6—11. 1 Cor. xv. 27. There is no law of any description whatever to be obeyed. The declaration is, that in Christ Jesus *we are saved*, that in Christ Jesus *we have eternal life*. This benefit we derive from Jesus being one with all mankind, as Son of Adam and Son of God. As one with us, he ended our sins in himself, and brought in an everlasting righteousness which is ours no less than his, when he died on the cross. *Dying for our offences, he rose again for our justification*. Rom. iv. 25. One with him, we are not only righteous, but live for evermore in him. And all this, be it observed, not as blessings which are conditional, contingent, and fortuitous, but as matters of actual fact and necessary enjoyment.

Such is the gospel. Glad tidings of great joy, whenever and wherever understood, to the guilty children of men.

“Salvation is yours,” says God in the scriptures, addressing human beings.

“I give it to you on no conditions; I exact from you the

the latter save unconditionally without reference to any terms whatever. If the former can rescue from perdition a part, much more must the latter rescue from perdition all.—Where otherwise is the *much more*? Surely it is not to be found in making Christ's death to pardon *unconditionally*, and his life to save only *conditionally*; in making his death to pardon *all*, and his life only to save *some*. Plain folks would be apt to call this a specimen of the *much less*. As to the *shall be saved* of the apostle, it is explained by Romans xiii. 11, &c. Salvation, when he wrote, was looked forward to, not enjoyed; and yet was viewed as a blessing, the enjoyment of which by the church, in its earnest at least, was speedily to be realized. Matt. xvi. 28. xxiv. 34, &c. &c.

fulfilment of no terms; I have secured it to you in my own Son. In Adam you have sinned and died: this is matter of fact. In Jesus you are righteous and live for ever: this is equally matter of fact. The film of flesh and mortality interposes naturally to hide this from your eyes. Fact nevertheless it is, that sin is in you swallowed up in righteousness, and death in you swallowed up in life. Fact it is, that you are even now,—ignorant, sinful, enemies although you be,—one with me in my well-beloved Son,”

That is, completed scripture, in which alone God speaks, never comes to the heart or mind of any one issuing and inculcating laws or precepts, but only conveying divine information, and thereby implanting divine principle. It acquaints us with the everlasting and unchangeable love borne towards us by God in his own Son, 1 John iv. 8—10, and it thereby constrains us to love God in return. Ibid. 19. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. When no scriptures existed, as in paradise, God issued to man a law of prohibition. When the Old Testament scriptures existed, as was the case at the time of our Lord's appearance in flesh, he issued to man a law of command. But now that all the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments exist, he issues to man no law at all. He now, through the medium of the scriptures, his completed word,—in every case where such is his good pleasure, and where it is in agreement with the purpose which he purposed in himself before the world began,—takes hold of the mind, thereby enlightening it and conforming it to himself. Him that hath ears to hear, he gives to hear. Every seed, whether vegetable or animal, takes effect according to its nature, producing an offspring or progeny corresponding to itself. 1 Cor. xv. 36—38. So do the scriptures, which are the seed of God, 1 Peter i. 23, operate, not miraculously, but agreeably to their nature,—producing divine light and divine principle, John xvii. 3, as their appropriate offspring, whenever, according to the good pleasure

of him whose seed they are, they take effect in the mind of any one. They influence him, by begetting in him the earnest of the divine nature, 2 Peter i. 4, not by stimulating him, as if laws they would do, to the exercise of the principles of human nature. As it thus happens that the scriptures, whenever they take effect, operate, not by prescribing laws, but by producing principle, it is obvious that every conditional notion respecting the applicability of scripture to us,—that every idea that God is therein forbidding or commanding us, is conditionally threatening or conditionally promising us,—has no other and no higher origin than mere fleshly mind. It is the mistake of applying to ourselves the record of God's conditional dealings with others; and is, therefore, not God actually speaking in the scriptures to us, but we attempting through the scriptures to speak to ourselves. This constitutes the very “head and front” of that exhibition of human enmity of which we are now treating. It is man putting his own fleshly sense upon scripture,—man, in the name of God, issuing laws to himself. God, let me repeat, is, through the scriptures, imparting to the members of his church divine information, and along with this divine love; never through that medium issuing to them laws of any description. He is making them free, and constraining them by the spirit of liberty; not dealing with them after the fashion of slaves or mercenaries. *The words that I speak unto you*, says Christ, *they are spirit, and they are life*. John vi. 63. And it is as rendered spirit and life to us,—it is as communicating to us, not the form of Jesus' mind while he was in flesh, but the form of his heavenly and glorified mind, 2 Cor. v. 5,—it is not as prescribing laws to us, but as swallowing up in us the principle of law by the principle of love, Rom. viii. 2, Heb. viii. 8—12,—that scripture is now at any time carried home to our hearts and consciences by its divine author.

SECTION SECOND.

NATURE OF HUMAN ENMITY TO GOSPEL, HATRED TO UNCONDITIONAL SALVATION. MEN BY NATURE IGNORANT, POSITIVELY SPEAKING, OF THE GOSPEL ; AND YET EVEN UPON NATURAL PRINCIPLES SO ACQUAINTED WITH IT NEGATIVELY, AS TO BRING THEM IN GUILTY, AND ENSURE THEIR CONDEMNATION FOR OPPOSING IT.

The import of completed scripture, or, which is the same thing, the import of what God says in completed scripture is, then, “ To every human being I give freely, in my Son Christ Jesus the second Adam, eternal life. 1 Cor. xv. 22, 1 John v. 11. This I proclaim as a matter of fact, and not as in any way or degree whatever dependent upon what man may do, or may abstain from doing ; as not in any way or degree whatever dependent upon man’s receiving, or not receiving, what I now declare.” 1 Tim. ii. 4.

Towards this revealed fact, and not towards law in any of its forms, is now going out the full tide of the enmity of the human mind. Not towards a conditional salvation ; for that man can understand and relish : but towards an unconditional one. Towards a salvation in which the Creator is everything, and the creature is nothing ; towards a salvation which is revealed as matter of fact. Individuals hate this doctrine. Sects and parties do so. A salvation by abstinence from evil, or by a loving acceptance of an offered Christ, or by the performance of some other crotchet of the human brain, is the salvation for them. “ Salvation by pure grace ! Salvation irrespective of the present state and circumstances of the creature altogether ! Salvation in spite of all man’s vileness and worthlessness — in spite of his ignorance, his immorality, his criminality, his neglect of religious duties, his opposition to God’s accredited messengers the

clergy! Salvation in which the unprincipled, the vicious, and the profligate are put upon a footing of equality with those whom the world respects and delights to honour! Abominable doctrine! How we loathe, how we abhor it! It is the vilest antinomianism. Let every man to whom the interests of morals and the good of society are dear, without distinction of sect or party, lift up his voice, and if necessary exert his arm likewise, in opposition to such a daring outrage on the character of God. Welcome the doctrine of salvation by faith, as a condition or *sine quâ non*; nay, even welcome the doctrine of salvation by works, in preference to a heresy so foul and so pestilent."—Thus talk men, and thus do they inflame the natural malignity of one another against God's simple and glorious message. They concoct systems of salvation professedly by grace, such as some of those to which I have just been adverting; and yet their great object, from first to last, is to shew that salvation is by anything rather than by grace. Grace is always found in the vocabulary of such individuals to signify, *a favour or favours bestowed conditionally!* Accordingly, God's simple declaration that those whom he addresses are saved,—that in him, apart from every condition performed or to be performed by themselves, they have eternal life,—is to all conditionalizers of the gospel, and this the more devout and serious they are, an object of the most concentrated spite and abhorrence.

Thus is it now, as it was in the days of our blessed Lord. Nothing roused the enmity of human nature against him so decidedly, as his declaration that publicans and harlots should enter into the kingdom of heaven before the Pharisees and self-righteous, the men high in reputation among their countrymen and contemporaries. Nothing rouses the enmity of human nature now against God so decidedly, as his intimating, that he bestows salvation with equal freedom on the vile as on the precious, on the profligate as on the most respect-

able members of society ; that the guilty children of men, without any reference to the distinctions which obtain among themselves, are all equally, on a footing of mere grace, the recipients of life everlasting. See Matt. xx. 1 — 15.

How diversified the characters by whom, how numerous the modes in which, enmity to this grand and glorious truth is displayed.—As to the characters. The arrant profligate, and the man of rigidly severe morals — the unreflecting, and the philosophic — the careless about religion, and the eminently serious, all concur in exhibiting it. Mankind are from time to time found disputing among themselves concerning almost every matter secular and religious, and carrying on their varied disputes, too, with no small degree of acrimony ; but let the gospel, the simple divine declaration of heavenly blessings being graciously conferred and unconditionally enjoyed, be proposed and urged upon their notice, and immediately other topics, however exciting and however productive of discordant feelings, are forgotten. The angry storms of previous controversy are hushed. Like Herod and Pontius Pilate, when a common enemy was presented to them in the person of Jesus Christ, the most embittered foes drop for a time their animosities. Here is a subject which must by all means and at all hazards be got rid of. If by neglect, well : if not, it must be crushed. Whatever, then, may be the diversities subsisting among themselves, in one closely-banded and unholy confederacy all sects and parties join themselves to withstand and overwhelm a truth which appears proclaiming hostility to, frowning defiance on, them all.—No less remarkable is the variety of ways in which the truth of a free and universal salvation is opposed. Sometimes by the sly innuendo ; sometimes by direct assault. Sometimes in the shape of attempting to establish a system which is obviously and avowedly inconsistent with the freedom of grace ; sometimes through the medium of theories

which, while they professedly admit the truth, nevertheless have for their object secretly to sap and undermine it. Sometimes by boldly and unequivocally proclaiming that the performance of certain terms and conditions is indispensable to the attainment of salvation and life everlasting; sometimes, while strenuously contending that salvation is of grace independently of works altogether, in the same breath, and as if totally unconscious of the absurdity which is perpetrated, by just as strenuously contending that Christ must be accepted, and the gospel offer must be embraced and clung to by all who would desire or hope to derive any advantage from him or it. In one thing, however diversified otherwise men's views may be, they all concur, namely, in rejecting a benefit which is strictly, perfectly, and absolutely unconditional; and in every way conceivable is a salvation of which the creature is a mere passive recipient, and which flows to him solely from the divine mercy in the channel of the Redeemer's righteousness, by all of them ridiculed, maligned, opposed. And this, too, keenly and pertinaciously. There has, since the days of the apostles, been no slackening in man's dislike of the gospel. Opposition to it has no ebbs and flows. One political party is at one time in the ascendant—another political party at another time. Fashion has been found to intrude into the sober walks of philosophy. And need I add that a succession of changes—a constant state of fluctuation—characterises the notions and opinions of mankind with regard even to fleshly religion. Not so however as regards the gospel. Towards it the world has always looked, and will always look with an eye of intense and unchanging malignity. Hatred to it burned in the breasts of a Nero and a Domitian—in the breasts of the contemporaries of Constantine—in the breasts of the votaries of the Church of Rome when they hunted down, persecuted, and put to death the Albi-

genses and Waldenses : it glows with equal malignity, it burns with equal fury, in the breasts of the great majority of nominal Protestants of the present day. Unchanged and unchangeable is this feeling. Proclaim the doctrines of grace — proclaim a salvation which is bestowed freely and bestowed on all — and you rouse at once the deadliest enmity of the human mind. A salvation which is of grace only — which comes to the creature gratuitously, and continues his certainly, irrespective of what he is and does — which is his even now — of which he cannot by any possibility deprive himself, and of which he cannot by any possibility be deprived by others — which, in one word, is free, complete, present, certain, and everlasting — never had the world's good opinion, and never can have it. It stands opposed to every creature notion — to every creature interest — to the very structure of the creature mind itself. Man hated it from the first moment of its announcement ; he will continue to hate it until time shall be no more. Jews and Gentiles, Roman Catholics and Protestants, Socinians and Calvinists, clergy and laity, the profligate and the serious, have equally agreed to heap on it every species of obloquy, to apply to it every opprobrious epithet, to misrepresent it in every way which calumny can suggest, to do whatever in them lies to excite against it the bitter and uncompromising hostility of the human race. Liberality towards every shade of mere human opinion however absurd, and forbearance towards every form of idolatry and superstition however gross, monstrous, and revolting, have been displayed ; and as time rolls on, will probably be more and more displayed. “But the gospel ! The declaration that God, in Christ, loves all mankind freely, certainly, and for ever ! The proclaimed fact that eternal life is God's gift, and the creature's present, eternal, and indefeasible enjoyment ! Towards this let no toleration be shewn ; to this let no quarter be given. Let it be run down ; let it

be obliterated from the earth, by the common consent of men of all sects and parties. It is no ordinary human advantage that is at stake. The doctrine which destroys every incentive to virtuous action, which subverts the foundations of morals, which threatens the very existence of society itself, falls to be regarded by all as their foe. What would human beings become,—how could the various orders of mankind be kept together, and restrained in due subordination,—were once the notion to become prevalent that all in the sight of God stand on one and the same footing?—that all are by him admitted to the regions of endless felicity? Let no feelings of tenderness or amity induce to spare such a doctrine. Agag-like, let it be hewn to pieces. *Delenda est ista Carthago!*”

I wot that through ignorance ye did it, said the apostle Peter, addressing the multitude assembled in Solomon’s porch, when he had occasion to refer to their crucifixion of the Lord Jesus. Acts iii. 17. So say I to the majority of professors of christianity, with reference to the hatred which they evince towards a free, a certain, and a finished salvation. They are ignorant of that doctrine which in the malignity of their hearts they oppose. And yet this must be maintained in a qualified sense. Positively the meaning of the doctrine conveyed in its own light, and in the light of the fact of its having proceeded from God, has never been opened up to them. For if so, they would be constrained to love, cherish, and rejoice in it. But, negatively, they so far understand it as, without having had their earthly and carnal notions superseded by it, to apprehend its standing directly opposed to these notions, and to be inconsistent with their retaining them. Ignorance, in fact, is a term which, in reference to this topic, as well as to kindred ones, must be applied with caution and discrimination to the state of the minds of the children of men naturally. The Jews were ignorant that

Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah ; and yet they possessed such a kind and degree of knowledge concerning him as caused their procedure in crucifying him to be stigmatised by the Apostle Peter as wicked. Acts ii. 23. Just so, although nominal professors of Christianity in opposing the gospel manifest their ignorance, they are not ignorant of what the human mind may know. They are not necessarily ignorant of the literal and fleshly meaning of much of what the scriptures themselves contain and teach. If the light that is in them, as contrasted with the light of God's mind, be darkness, there is nevertheless in them a certain species and measure of light. Matt. vi. 23. And on this species and measure of light or knowledge rests all the criminality of men, especially the guilt which they contract in withstanding the gospel. Were man capable of attaining to no natural knowledge whatever of morals and religion through a fleshly understanding of the scriptures, he would be capable of contracting no guilt whatever. For the guilt of an intelligent being must ever stand connected with his violation of the dictates of views and principles which he actually possesses ; not with his performance or non-performance of actions, the guilt or the obligatory nature of which had never been made known to him ; and not with his non-possession of principles which it had never seemed meet to God to bestow upon him. Otherwise, how could God, as the righteous judge, condemn the world ? Rom. iii. 6. Well, then, men possess a certain kind and degree of knowledge, which, violated by them in their opposition to the gospel, leads to and issues in their condemnation. As having natural consciences, or as being endowed with the faculty of distinguishing between right and wrong, and being furnished with materials for the exercise of this faculty, they know that they are all, without exception, in one way or another, chargeable with being violators of their own dictates of duty. Rom. ii. 14, 15. iii. 19. This is attended in them, more or less,

with remorse and a sense of fear, as well as with a desire to get rid of the consequences of transgression. This natural knowledge of right and wrong, and the sense of guilt which accompanies it, as it is in every one the result of revelation, traditionally or otherwise brought to his ears, and affecting his natural mind, so is it capable of being deepened and widened to an indefinite extent, by the language of revelation more and more decidedly brought under his notice, and apprehended by his fleshly intellect.—Again, man is capable of understanding, more or less, through his acquaintance with language and his intercourse with his fellow-men, what a gift is. And although no favours conferred by one man on another can ever be said to be entirely undeserved, in the same sense and to the same extent in which the favours conferred by God on man are so,—every man having claims, in one way or another, and of one kind or another, upon his fellow-men,—still a tolerably correct notion of what a gift, as distinguished from wages, is, all human beings have acquired or may acquire. Now, it is to beings thus constituted and situated,—it is to beings possessed of such knowledge,—that the gospel is addressed. To beings ignorant of the gospel, and yet not destitute of principles or ignorant of facts, to which the gospel makes its appeal, and on which its rests its claims to be attended to. Ignorant of its nature as the beings who hear it are, it nevertheless fastens in their own minds upon truths and feelings with which they are well acquainted. A man of ordinary fleshly understanding hearing it may at once perceive that it proclaims all the guilt with which he feels his conscience loaded to have been washed away by the blood of Christ. And he may perceive also that it proclaims salvation and eternal life to be bestowed on him unconditionally. I say he may perceive all this, and much more than this, without perceiving that what is said is true. He feels that he is guilty; he knows what a gift is; and therefore he may so

far understand what the gospel declares, without at the same time being convinced of its truth. The gospel may, by recognizing their existence, so far commend itself to principles which he has, as to be in a certain sense comprehended by him; and yet it may in so doing naturally stir up into exercise, and into the most deadly hostility, other principles of which he is possessed. This is exactly what it does. And in this way comes out man's enmity to the gospel. He is told that Christ's blood cleanseth from all sin. 1 John i. 7. He is told that God gives eternal life freely in his own Son. Ibid. v. 11. He hears this. He, to a certain degree, or rather in a certain sense, understands this. His natural conscience, so far from informing him *certainly* that the doctrine thus proclaimed to him is untrue, in some measure, although *negatively*,* attests its truth and confirms its accuracy. It suits his case, as shewing God taking away what natural conscience sometimes suggests to him he cannot take away himself, and in bestowing on him freely what the same conscience sometimes suggests to him there is no other way in which he can become possessed of. So far it thus appears is even his natural conscience fastened on by the gospel. And in this way and by this means is the foundation laid for his contracting of guilt. He certainly is not by all this process assured of the gospel being true: but again, on the other hand, so far from being assured that it is false, suspicions to the contrary, suspicions in favour of it have been injected into his mind. Now, we have the highest authority for knowing that he who doubteth is damned or condemned if he act in the teeth of his doubts. *He that doubteth is damned*, or condemned, *if he eat*. Rom. xiv. 23. That is, his condemnation

* Negatively, not positively. He is never thoroughly satisfied that it is *untrue*, but, on the other hand, he is never satisfied that it is *true*. To see divine truth as divine truth, or to see it positively, is the privilege of the members of the church alone.

proceeds on the principle, not of his being satisfied that to eat was wrong, but of his not being satisfied that to eat was right. He had suspicions merely as to the impropriety of eating. These while they continued should have caused him to abstain from doing so. Only thus could he escape judgment or condemnation. Nevertheless, should he in the teeth of such doubts or suspicions eat, that is, act as if he were fully satisfied as to the propriety of his conduct, he should incur guilt and draw down on himself condemnation. Just so in regard to the opposition which mere fleshly-minded men who have heard it give to the gospel. Upon their natural consciences the gospel has, to a certain extent, fastened: it may be true, or at all events they are not absolutely certain that it is false; it has excited suspicions that it may after all be true in their minds; and yet they oppose it; that is, they venture to act as if they had a perfect and absolutely certain conviction of its falsehood. They venture to act as they would be entitled to do only on the ground and in the event of their being absolutely certain that it was false. This is what condemns them. True, there are in the mind of every man by whom the gospel is opposed, over and above the principles which prevent him from being thoroughly satisfied of its falsehood, other principles which urge and stimulate him to act in regard to it as if it were in reality the grossest of impostures. He must, if he admit its truth, condemn himself for his previous opposition to it. He must condemn also the present and decided opposition of others. This is disagreeable enough. But it is not all. Worldly interests of every description rise up to withstand his reception of the truth. Loss of friends, loss of business, loss of reputation, all stare him in the face. Mockery, insult, beggary. Are these to be borne? And for what? For the truth? No. For maintaining that which after all may turn out to be false. He knows it not to be false, and yet he knows it not to be true. For does not the

gospel, as proclaiming a free and full salvation in Christ to all, outrage all his fleshly notions concerning the advantages to be derived in a future state of existence from the practice of good morals in this ? Does it not appear to endanger the best interests, indeed the very foundation of society ? Does it not destroy every distinction between the righteous and the wicked ? How can such procedure be reconciled with the justice of God ? Above all, does it not expressly contradict scripture as understood by himself, and as interpreted by some of the best, and holiest, and wisest of men ? These, and a thousand other consequences, real or fancied, appearing to result from the gospel being true, alienate his mind from it, and stir him up to exhibit the most decided hostility towards it. Such is frequently, I suspect, the process through which minds of a reflective turn, who never see the truth of the gospel, but upon whom on natural grounds it has succeeded in fastening some tolerably strong impressions, pass, before they appear finally in the attitude of its sturdy and uncompromising foes. No such lengthened process, however, is required in the case of the majority of those who hear the gospel. They are by nature its enemies ; and the moment it is brought to their ears, that moment does the fleshly mind in them rise up against it. The fleshly conscience, however much it may be impressed by it, nevertheless feels so stung and irritated by it, that it is provoked at once into the manifestation of enmity. Acts ii. 37. vii. 54. xiii. 45—50. The necessarily conditional and limited mind of man shews itself immediately to hate the necessarily unconditional and unlimited mind of God. Matt. xx. 15. Man, notwithstanding his want of certainty that the gospel is untrue, nay, notwithstanding suspicions that after all it may be true, feels himself unable to rise above his nature. The suspicions introduced into his mind in its favour, and founded upon principles which even he himself recognises, are therefore overborne and stifled.

And though these suspicions may continue there during life, nay, although they may be even strengthened and increased, proving thereby a source of the greatest annoyance to him by the remorse and self-condemnation of which they are productive, he may nevertheless continue in the teeth of them violently and increasingly to oppose the gospel.—Ignorant of the gospel, then, all who oppose it are; and yet not ignorant of facts or destitute of principles to which, even in the unregenerate, the gospel appeals and on which it fastens. Therefore although those who withstand the doctrine of the fulness, the freeness, and the universality of divine grace, do so influenced by total ignorance of what that grace is and implies, nevertheless in so doing they so sturdily oppose and violate views, and principles, and convictions of their minds and natures, as to ensure to and draw down upon themselves decided and righteous condemnation.

Ignorance of the gospel, it thus appears, characterises all by whom it is opposed; and yet, in this opposition there is involved such a measure of knowledge of facts and principles which the gospel presupposes and with which it is strictly consistent, and such a violation of that knowledge, as imparts to the opposition the character of being wilful and intentional, and thereby ensures the condemnation of those who are guilty of it. I now remark, that the more this fleshly knowledge of what is implied in the gospel is possessed, whether by means of natural ability, education, literary and scientific attainments, or careful instruction in the dogmas of a religion such as man's natural mind is capable of propounding and understanding, the more does hatred to the gospel come out and display itself. To none is a salvation which is enjoyed irrespective of what a man naturally is and does more hateful, than to him who is upon natural principles the most enlightened. It contradicts his sense of propriety; it offends all his notions of right and wrong. In so far as eternity is

concerned, it degrades the refined and the moral to a level with the ignorant, the brutal, the wanton, and the cruel. It presents to him a view of things the very opposite of that with which he is familiar in his ordinary intercourse with society. He is therefore revolted by it. True, it has the word of God for its basis; which declares that between one man and another in the sight of God there is, in the matter of salvation, no difference whatever. Rom. iii. 10—19; see also Isaiah xl. 4, 5. All in Adam have sinned—all in Christ are saved. But what of that? The man in question looks not at matters in the light of the word of God, but in the light of his own reason only. And the light of reason, although when viewed in the light of revelation seen to be consistent with it, nevertheless, so long as higher principles are not possessed, necessarily does appear to him to contradict the language and light of revelation. In vain, in the case of such an one, does the word of revelation fasten upon certain principles of his and appeal to them; it appears to him to contradict too many of these same natural principles for him to think of lending an ear to its averments. And the greater the natural knowledge which he possesses, while a larger number of natural principles is in his mind by revelation fastened on, the larger also is the number of these same natural principles which by revelation, in the form of the gospel, appears to him to be outraged and violated. Fleshly knowledge of divine truth,* therefore, or that knowledge of religion to which a man by dint of the exercise of his natural powers and faculties is capable of attaining, while in proportion to its increase it is productive of a conscience increasingly enlightened upon natural principles, by affording at the same time increased opportunities for the violation

* A misnomer. There is no fleshly knowledge of divine truth. Such knowledge is ignorance. I use the phrase merely to arrest attention and bring out my meaning.

of this conscience, affords increased opportunities, also, for manifesting the enmity of fleshly mind to the gospel of truth, and thereby for sealing its own condemnation.

Condemnation of human nature thus, in every one of the three instances of man's enmity to God of which we treat, proceeds equally and justly on the ground of man's violation of conscience, or of natural views and principles which he possesses. Adam, in listening to the voice of his wife repeating and enforcing the temptation of the serpent, small as his knowledge of duty was, extending only to the conviction that he was bound not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, violated that conviction. Gen. iii. 1—6. Hence his condemnation. Ibid. 17—19.—The majority of Jews and Gentiles, in refusing obedience to the law of faith proclaimed by the apostles, and shewn to be obligatory on them by means of the signs and wonders with which the apostolic ministry was attended and confirmed, Acts ii. 1—13, x. 44—46, Heb. ii. 1—4, violated the convictions which a series of miracles had produced, John xi. 47, Acts iv. 14—17, Ibid. xiv. 8—19, &c., and the stinging effects of appeals made to their hearts and consciences, Acts ii. 37, Ibid. vii. 54, Ibid. xvii. 32, Ibid. xxiv. 25, Ibid. xxvi. 28—32, as well as convictions produced by their own knowledge of the Old Testament scriptures, a species of evidence which the apostles were continually enforcing. Acts ii. 14—36, Ibid. iii. 12—26, Ibid. iv. 8—12, Ibid. xiii. 16—37, &c. Hence their condemnation. Matt. xii. 31, 32, Acts xiii. 40, 41, 46, Ibid. xxviii. 25—28.—And all men, in this present and last æra of the world, who reject the plain revealed truth of salvation being God's gift to all, from preference to self-devised systems which represent heavenly blessings as in one way or another the reward to some of human merit, violate those convictions, or, at all events, suspicions of their own personal guilt, of the gradual increase of that guilt, of their inability to

get rid of guilt by any efforts of their own, and of the adaptation of a blessing which is freely bestowed to their state and circumstances as guilty creatures, which the word of God succeeds from time to time in fastening even upon their own creature and fleshly minds. Hence their condemnation.* In every one of these instances is conscience violated, and in every one of them, therefore, is condemnation justly incurred: the sentence pronounced by the creature upon itself, in spite of all the reluctance to do so occasioned by its own self-love, ratifying in every case the sentence pronounced by God. Rom. ii. 12—15, 1 John iii. 20.

And as Adam was the representative of the whole human race in what he did, they having been involved in his guilt and having incurred his condemnation, so were unbelieving Jews and Gentiles during the enforcement of the law of command, and so are all human beings who now hear of and reject a salvation which is freely and universally bestowed, in what they did and do, the representatives of the whole human race likewise. The whole family of man are concluded by their respective acts. Proper, indeed, is it, that it should be so. The total unworthiness, not merely of themselves, but of human nature as a whole, is what these selected individuals are by a series of gradations evincing. Adam's transgression shewed that human nature was unworthy to live for ever in time; the unbelief of Jews and Gentiles testified its unworthiness to enter into the heavenly kingdom; and that large mass of human beings who since the days of the apostles have been preferring salvation through a compliance with the dictates of self-imposed law to the salvation which is of grace, putting the topstone on the fabric, are the means of shewing their nature to be unworthy of aught save everlasting destruction. The whole taken together display the thorough enmity

* See the principles of this laid down in the 2nd and 3rd chapters of the Epistle to the Romans, as well as elsewhere.

of man's mind to God; and by means of the whole taken together, death, exclusion from the kingdom of heaven, and complete and everlasting destruction are shewn to be the exact deserts of human nature.

Man's enmity to God could not proceed further than the rejection of a salvation which is unconditionally bestowed by God upon him, through a preference of attempting to earn salvation by fulfilment of a series of conditions which are humanly devised and humanly imposed; and the punishment of this enmity could not be carried out beyond the everlasting destruction of man's nature. And beautifully adapted is the punishment to the display of enmity. In thinking and maintaining that I can only escape everlasting destruction, and be saved, on condition of my saving myself,—whether by faith or by works, or by both combined, it matters not,—of course, I pronounce sentence of destruction upon myself, should I fail in my attempt. But I cannot save myself. As I could not, in Adam, fulfil the condition whereby alone I could have escaped death; and as I could not, in the persons of Abraham's fleshly descendants, fulfil the condition whereby alone I could have entitled myself to admission into the heavenly kingdom; so, much less can I fulfil the condition or conditions whereby alone I can entitle my nature to escape destruction, and live for ever in glory. Therefore as I resolve to be saved only on my fulfilling certain conditions, as I pronounce myself worthy of everlasting punishment in the event of my not fulfilling them, and as I neither do nor can fulfil them, God, in strict conformity with the sentence which I pronounce upon myself, and as it were ratifying that sentence, consigns me, as a human being, or consigns human nature in me, on my own principles and as its appropriate recompense, to everlasting destruction.

SECTION THIRD.

CAUSES WHY MAN OPPOSES GOD'S REVELATION OF FACTS
CONCERNING HUMAN SALVATION. TWOFOLD WAY OF
MAN'S DISPLAYING HIS ENMITY TO THESE DIVINELY
REVEALED FACTS.

But let us go back a little way in our statements.

Considering what has been said, the causes of man's exhibiting enmity to God, in rejecting the revealed fact that eternal life is freely bestowed, are manifestly two-fold: one positive, the other negative.

The positive cause, or the cause positively, is man's native opposition to God, or the attitude of hostility in which human nature stands essentially and necessarily to the divine nature.* Man's mind of flesh is enmity to God. Rom. viii. 7. It can be nothing else. Ibid. Whether God address man in the form of prohibition, threatening loss; or in that of command, promising reward; or in neither form, proclaiming merely what he himself is, and what human beings in him are, it matters not. To all and to every form of divine address man turns a deaf ear. To all and to every form of it he rises up in opposition. And to the last form, the most decidedly and doggedly so; for it stands the most opposed to man's nature. Advantages which are to be earned by abstinence from transgression, or by obedience to command, man can acquire some apprehension of. Nay, as the very nature of man and constitution of human society imply that equivalents of one kind or another must be given as a consideration for benefits which we are to obtain and possess, when God, in the cases of Adam and the Jews, made the continued possession, or the

* For an enlarged view of this subject I must refer to my *Divine Inversion; or a View of the Character of God as in all respects Opposed to the Character of Man*.

acquisition of his benefits, to depend on terms and conditions to be fulfilled by them, he addressed himself to principles well known and deeply rooted in human nature. But a blessing which is bestowed freely! A benefit so unconditional, that as nothing has been done to deserve it in time past, so can no return be made for it in time to come! Eternal life, as already, as certainly, as indefeasibly ours, and this in opposition to the testimony of our senses, and in contradiction to all those notions of considerations and equivalents which are current among mankind! This, this is what shocks and revolts, in the strongest manner possible, the mind of man. This stands opposed to all that man knows and feels naturally concerning himself and others—stands opposed to the whole procedure of human beings in the ordinary intercourse of society. In vain do you appeal to man's understanding in this matter. In vain do you reason with him on the ground of his own professed apprehensions of the divine nature, of the meaning of the word gift, and of the enjoyment of eternal life gratuitously being the only way in which it can be enjoyed by man. You perhaps succeed in fastening some suspicions on his natural conscience. But as counterbalancing this, nay, as if the indulgence of such suspicions constituted the most powerful of all irritants, you at the same time stir up in opposition to the gospel the strongest and most devilish feelings of the human mind. Rather, you stir up in opposition to it the human mind itself. To God and to God's nature stand opposed man and man's nature. In the gospel, as announcing blessings which are freely and universally conferred, God's nature is embodied. Present, then, this gospel to the mind of man, enforce it on his notice. urge his attention to it, and what can follow, but a display on his part of an opposition to it, which has its seat, not in trifling notions or superficial reasonings, but in the depths and inmost constitution of human nature. Blessings which

are in any sense *conditional* man can welcome, as witness the readiness with which he receives and acquiesces in a spurious gospel; but blessings which are so decidedly *unconditional* as to be in no sense whatever dependent on what man is, or man does,—blessings which are announced as mere matter of fact,—must ever encounter man's rankest and deadliest enmity.

The negative cause, or cause negatively, of the exhibition of man's enmity to God, in the rejection of the gospel on the part of the great majority of those to whose ears it comes, is that God does not choose, in the case of such, to overcome this opposition. One of his grand objects in dealing with human beings has been, to allow them to shew fully what they are. Hence he leaves the great bulk of them to themselves. Matt. xiii. 1—23, especially 11th. They are let alone. This being the case, *eyes have they, but they see not; ears have they, but they hear not.* Ezek. xii. 2.; Rom. xi. 8. Impressions are from time to time made on their natural understandings and consciences; but as it is not the divine purpose that such impressions should go further, they are productive of nothing but increased hostility to that truth to which they owe their origin. Such persons require not their fellow-men to prompt them to reject the gospel. Their own hearts constrain them to do so. Undoubtedly, in presenting to them salvation as a blessing which is yet to be earned by their faith or obedience, or both, not as a blessing which is already and freely bestowed, such of their fellow-men as they elevate to be their religious teachers, and worship as their idols, contribute towards strengthening them in their resolutions and exhibitions of enmity. But these external excitements are not absolutely required. Their own minds, apart from all such influences, urge and impel them to oppose the gospel. Religious teachers, however hypocritical they may be, and hypocritical enough they are, in

stimulating the enmity of their hearers to the truth, are actually the slaves of that very enmity themselves. They *are blind leaders of the blind*.—To return. God leaving the human mind to itself, its enmity to the truth invariably and necessarily makes its appearance. His withholding that divine light, and the exercise of that divine power, by which alone the enmity of man's mind to himself can be overcome, is thus, then, negatively the cause of the display of that enmity. He might overcome it, were it his good pleasure to do so. Under no obligation, however, is he to interfere in any case to prevent its operation. Some, no doubt, have the enmity subdued in them. But this, be it observed, is in every instance the result of free and sovereign grace on God's part; no human being having any right whatever to prefer a claim to his interposition. And while he will take care, in his own good time and way, to bring the members of his church, previously known to himself alone, into the enjoyment of the light and liberty of the glorious gospel, he will in no respect whatever interfere with the great majority of the human race, but leaving them to the influence of those natural principles which are positively the cause of their display of enmity to himself, and manifesting thereby that for him to leave men to themselves is all that is required on his part to be the cause negatively of their so acting, he will thus accomplish his grand object of affording human nature the opportunity to make a full and satisfactory disclosure of what it is.

As man's enmity to the gospel is thus the result of the operation of causes both positive and negative, of human nature *constraining* to its display, and of God not *restraining* from its display; or as there is a twofold reason for man rejecting the message of a salvation which is freely, certainly, and universally bestowed, so does his enmity display itself after a twofold fashion.

First. He opposes and puts away from him with abhor-

rence God's revealed mode of salvation. Although acquainted with the sense which the word gift bears in ordinary language, and satisfied that man may bestow favours gratuitously upon his fellow man, he nevertheless cannot credit the scriptures, when they declare that God bestows heavenly blessings freely, so freely, that they are enjoyed without any act whatever performed, or any condition whatever fulfilled, on the part of man; and that upon no other principle, and in no other way, can they be enjoyed by the creature. Two circumstances stand in the way of man's receiving and acquiescing in this view; namely, 1st, the conditional or limited character of the human mind, agreeably to its Adamic origin and constitution, by which human beings are absolutely compelled to regard the continued possession, or the acquisition of heavenly benefits, as necessarily dependent on their abstinence from evil, or positive fulfilment of certain prescribed terms; and, 2ndly, the consciousness of guilt under which every adult human being labours,*—guilt, according to the suggestions of fleshly conscience, being inconsistent with our attaining to and enjoying a state of perfect righteousness and life.† To which circumstances, as further explanatory of the fleshly mind's rejection of the gospel, may be added man's ignorance naturally of what is implied in the mediatorial character of Jesus, and of the place which Jesus himself occupies in the divine scheme of salvation. Man naturally knows not that Jesus' righteousness, perfected in his death, Phil. ii. 8, as divine,

* His thoughts, if at one time they excuse, at another accusing him. See Romans ii. 14, 15.

† And fleshly conscience is right. God in this, as in many other respects, ratifies its sentence. Neither guilt nor the guilty nature attains to the enjoyment of heaven and life everlasting. He who is guilty and dying now, no doubt is the same being who is righteous and living for evermore hereafter. But he lives for evermore, not as a guilty one, or as a partaker of a guilty nature; on the contrary, he lives for evermore in consequence of having his his guilt swallowed up in Christ's righteousness,—his guilty nature swallowed up in Christ's divine nature. — I wish to be most explicit on this point.

swallows up guilt, which is a mere affection of a creature; Rom. v. 21; Heb. ix. 28; and that his life, perfected in his resurrection and ascension, John xvii. 5, Acts ii. 28, xiii. 33—37; Heb. vii. 15—28, as divine, swallows up death, which likewise is a mere affection of the creature. 1 Cor. xv. 54; 2 Cor. v. 4. He knows not that Jesus as the mediator between God and man, as at once God and man, took sin upon him and subjected himself to death by taking hold of the nature to which sin and death attached, that by bringing that nature to an end, purified and perfected in himself, he might thereby bring sin and death to an end in himself for ever. In fact he knows not that the very principle of conditionality ended and was swallowed up, in the fulfilment of all conditions by him who is the unconditional and the unlimited one. And that in Jesus revealed unconditionally and unlimitedly, that is as risen and glorified, an unconditional and unlimited, and therefore a present, certain, and everlasting righteousness and life are by the creature enjoyed. Constituted then conditionally as human beings naturally are, conscious of guilt and ignorant of him in whose righteousness and life sin and death its consequence are swallowed up, can any other practical result follow the presentation to the majority of mankind of views of heavenly blessings as bestowed unconditionally, supposing such views to be presented, than their instant and decided rejection? They are possessed of conditional and limited natures themselves. But the gospel is the manifestation of the swallowing up of the conditional and limited nature of Adam the creature, in the unconditional and unlimited nature of Jesus the Creator. That is, the gospel presents Christ to man as human nature's destroyer, in the very act of being the new Creator of man in himself. This truth, the divine nature in the church, imparted by itself, relishes and delights in. But if such a truth be addressed to

mere human nature,—a nature which loves, clings to, and delights in itself,—with what other feelings can the conditional and limited nature of man regard that unconditional and unlimited nature of God, in which it is destined ultimately to be swallowed up, but those of intense, unmitigated, and overwhelming abhorrence?

Secondly. Not content with merely rejecting God's scheme of salvation, man proceeds still farther to insult God and manifest his enmity to him, by setting up in opposition to God's scheme a scheme of salvation of his own. Rather, let me say, a multiplicity of such schemes; for they are as numerous and diversified as are the minds of human beings themselves. Legion is their appropriate name. And yet as the human mind, however diversified in different individuals it may be, has certain leading traits or characteristics which are common to all; so, however diversified may be the systems of salvation which men have devised and set up in opposition to that of God, they have all certain features in common by which their common origin is betrayed. They all prescribe conditions, as necessary to be complied with by the creature before he can earn or deserve heavenly blessings; and they all denounce future vengeance, in the shape of torments limited or unlimited, against those by whom the prescribed conditions are not complied with. As to their prescribing conditions: from the Church of Rome, the monster anti-Christian community, down to the pettiest dissenting conventicle,—from the most rigid professor of Calvinism, down to the most accommodating disciple of Socinus,—all have their terms of salvation: some more strictly, some more loosely defined; some more rigorously, some with greater latitude of interpretation as to practice imposed. A certain body of doctrines, whatever that may be, must be believed; a certain code of morals, whatever that may be, must be observed. Priests must be employed as negociators with

Deity ; or Protestant pastors must have our spiritual allegiance transferred to them ; or if we reject priests and clergy of all descriptions, we must at all events assemble ourselves together with others as churches of Christ. We must be baptized in infancy, or we must be baptized as adults ; we must receive from the hands of “ the maker of God,” (as Voltaire somewhat profanely, and yet not untruly, styles the priest,) the consecrated wafer, fancying that we are eating Christ’s actual flesh and drinking his blood—or we must eat bread and drink wine, endeavouring to persuade ourselves that we take Christ’s body and blood along with these elements—or, at the lowest, that we thus act in obedience to his commandment as well as in remembrance of him. We must be confirmed by bishops, we must confess our sins to priests, we must receive extreme unction and the viaticum *in extremis* ; or we must undergo Presbyterian penances, or submit to the exercise of Independent discipline. We must be Episcopalians, or Presbyterians, or Independents. We must abstain from evil ; we must practise good. We must believe on Christ ; we must receive him as he is freely offered to us in the gospel. According, then, to fleshly systems of Christianity, set up in opposition to God’s system which reveals eternal life as bestowed unconditionally, conditions of one kind or another, or conditions of various kinds must be fulfilled by us. The conditions prescribed by different sects and individuals may differ ; indeed do differ. But conditions there are. None can say, because none know, “ *You are saved. Life everlasting is yours.*” Alas ! To do so would be to blow sectarianism to atoms, and thereby to destroy at once and for ever the whole influence of the clerical tribe, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant.—And then as to the consequence of the non-fulfilment of the conditions prescribed. That is uniformly the loss of salvation, accompanied by the infliction of the most awful and protracted torments in another

state of existence. True, the opinions of mankind varying as to what exactly constitute the terms of enjoying life everlasting, their opinions vary of necessity likewise as to who are the parties by whom these all-important terms are to be regarded as being fulfilled. The Roman Catholic revolting against his ecclesiastical superiors, and the Protestant understanding in a Puseyistic sense any of the Thirty-nine Articles, however much in the former case Protestants may applaud, and in the latter case Roman Catholics may find nothing to condemn, will each incur the anathemas of those with whom respectively he stands connected. Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists—Sandemanians, Walkerites, and Separatists—members of large and flourishing communities, and those connected with small and languishing sects—all have their distinct grounds of condemnation. Those condemned by one are objects of approbation to another. But all, although launching out their bitterest anathemas against one another, agree in this, that those who come short of the fulfilment of the terms of salvation prescribed by their respective sects are obnoxious to everlasting torments. Conditions of salvation all concur in thinking there are; and except by means of the fulfilment of such conditions none can be saved.—Whence these various systems of the conditional enjoyment of eternal life, and whence the terrors by which they are sanctioned? From the brain of man merely. They can claim no higher origin. To all their supporters we may with the most perfect propriety address the pungent query proposed to the seven sons of Sceva the Jew: “*Jesus we know; and Paul we know; but who are ye?*” Acts xix. 15.—“God we know imposed the law of prohibition on Adam; God we know gave the law from Mount Sinai to the Israelites, and through the instrumentality of the apostles issued to Jews and Gentiles the law of faith, as well as thereby brought together and organized the churches of the reconciled ones. In all this we see and

recognise the authority of God. In every such case we perceive that it was the duty of the creature to obey, and that at his peril he refused to do so. But who gave rise to your various and discordant communities? Can you point us to any second Sinai? Can you shew us divine and miraculous influences coming down on you and resting on you? Can you shew us that you are kept together by any authority superior to that of man?—To an attempt to copy the apostles, to superstitious fear, to national legislatures, to caprice, to the constraint imposed by a fleshly sense of duty, we have no difficulty in tracing the origin of the whole of you. You are mere voluntary associations—if indeed voluntary be not a term too good to be applied to many of you, who are the slaves of abject superstition, and the playthings of a crafty and ambitious priesthood. At all events your origin is human. Man set you up. Man upholds you. And as your origin is human, so is your authority merely human likewise. As when you speak and teach, it is but man speaking and teaching; so when you profess to wield the thunderbolts of Jehovah, it is but man uttering threats,—it is but man uttering *big swelling words of vanity*. And if you cannot trace your origin beyond man,—if you can point us to no higher authority possessed by you than that derived from ambitious and artful priests, or complaisant legislatures, or weak and credulous dupes agreeing to fill your coffers and aggrandize your station in society,—fancy ye that a sense of duty should constrain us to yield an obedience to the decrees of mere worms of the dust like you, which was due unquestionably to the law of God? Nay, that the very same sense of duty which should have obliged us to obey the authority of God should not equally oblige us to resist and trample under foot the usurping authority of man, when presuming to speak and threaten in the name of God?—No doubt the system set up at Mount Sinai, and that temporarily established by the inspired

apostles after the day of Pentecost, have suggested their various systems to the founders of spurious christian churches. In establishing systems similar to Judaism, and similar to those of the apostles, there can be no question that some have supposed *they were doing God service*. John xvi. 2. But then, what authority had mere men to set up any system of religion at all? And still more, knowing that every such system was a mere creature of their own, what right had they, presumptuously and blasphemously, to ascribe to it powers and privileges which are divine? The conditional system of Moses at the destruction of Jerusalem passed away, and with it all the miraculous influences which had attended its establishment and justified its continuance. What right, then, had mere men to establish as divine, earthly and conditional systems of religion, not only without miracles to justify them in so doing, but in direct opposition to the heavenly and unconditional system of the Lord Jesus?"—In vain do we wait for satisfactory answers to these queries from the friends and supporters of earthly churches and conditional systems of salvation. With the weapons furnished us by God's word, therefore, we assail and expose all such delusive views. The existence and prevalence of them affords the most striking evidence of the deadly hate borne by the mind of man to the mind of God. They are mere figments of man's creation: they are the mere offspring of his self-idolatrous character and propensities. And yet they are regarded by him as in their nature and origin divine. Ignorant of the living and true God, and of life everlasting as enjoyed freely and certainly in his Son Jesus Christ, man, prompted by a nature which is essentially opposed to God, and to all that proceeds from God, sets up in God's name, and as if by God's authority, systems which propose heavenly blessings conditionally, or in such a way as to meet his own fleshly apprehensions on the subject; and having done so, before the creations of his own imagination he falls down prostrate. His enmity to God thus displays itself, not merely

in rejecting what is God's, but in setting up as God's what stands diametrically opposed to him; not merely in refusing to honour the Creator's system, but in giving to a system which is the creature of his own brain the respect and reverence which are due to what proceeds from the Creator alone. He rejects the doctrine of eternal life being unconditionally bestowed which God hath devised and revealed; and he sets up in opposition to it a system of his own devising, in which God is represented as bestowing eternal life upon himself and others in the event of the fulfilment of certain conditions by himself and them.—He loathes, he hates, he execrates a free salvation. Creatures enjoying life everlasting certainly and universally in Christ Jesus is a doctrine which his reason, his pride, his regard for the interests of morality, all conspire to induce him to spurn at.—But this is not enough. He must correct the errors of the All-wise. He must teach God a more excellent way. For this purpose he must himself assume the attitude, and rank, and character of God. He must set up a scheme or schemes in which salvation is only to be enjoyed by creatures conditionally. He must declare this to be divine. He must himself do homage to it, and exact the homage of others to it likewise. And he must denounce the most terrific judgments—must threaten the everlasting torments of hell—against all who refuse to bow to *his* divine decision.

SECTION FOURTH.

MAN CONSUMMATES HIS ENMITY TO GOD BY SETTING HIMSELF ABOVE GOD; AND THIS BY ATTEMPTING TO SUPERSEDE DIVINELY-REVEALED TRUTHS BY HUMANLY-DEvised AND CONCOCTED FALSEHOODS.

Such is the consummation of man's enmity to God.

It is man, no longer contented with merely opposing God

after an inferior fashion, actually vaulting into God's throne, seizing God's sceptre, and presuming to exercise God's authority. It is man *opposing and exalting himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped*: it is man *as God, sitting in the conscience*, which is the *temple of God, shewing himself that he is God*. 2 Thes. ii. 4.

For the long period of eighteen hundred years has man been evincing himself the enemy of God, after this highest and most blasphemous fashion.

In Adam's case, man's enmity to God came out merely in his wishing or aspiring to be as God. Gen. iii. 6. He was conscious that he was God's inferior; but thought that, by eating of the forbidden fruit, he might get rid of his inferiority, and become God's equal.

In the case of the Jews, as possessed of privileges and interested in an economy which, although temporary, were nevertheless divine in their origin—as entitled to, and as characterised by the epithet of *gods*,* John x. 34, 35, compared with Psalm lxxxii. 6, 7, and Rev. xii. 7—9,—their enmity soared no higher than to maintain themselves on a footing of equality with God. Their opposition to God went no farther than to resist the introduction of a superior and heavenly divine system, on the ground of zeal for the inferior and earthly divine system with which they themselves were

* Or *angels of God*. The expressions are synonymous, as may be seen by comparing Psalm viii. 5, (Hebrew,) with Heb. ii. 7, 9; Psalm xcvi. 7, with Heb. i. 6; Psalm cxxxviii. 1, in the Hebrew, with the Greek of the Septuagint, &c. By *gods*, or *angels of God*, in Heb. 1st and 2nd chapters, is evidently meant Abraham's fleshly descendants, as distinguished from the *sons or children of God*, Christ's spiritual descendants. Compare Heb. ii. 5, where the New Testament economy is represented as not being subjected to *angels of God* or Jews, as the Old was, with Ibid. 10—14, in which the character of God's people as his *sons* is dwelt on.—Verily Christ taketh not hold of *angels*, or the members of the fleshly church, to render them his sons or spiritual church; but he taketh hold of *the seed of Abraham*, or of all possessed of Abraham's faith, whether Jews or Gentiles, for this purpose. Verse 16. See Galatians iii. 29.

connected. They, therefore, did not so much trample God under foot, as oppose one system, confessedly of divine origin, to another system, also of divine origin.

But now man has advanced to the exhibition of enmity to God in its highest, its most offensive, and its most atrocious form. Not content with aspiring to be as God — not content to assume equality with God — he now asserts superiority over God. He now puts Deity under his feet. With no system of divine origin to contend for, as the Jews had, he now sets up human systems, as if they were divine. With no divine authority to plead, he now claims for his own decrees an authority that is divine.* God is no longer his superior; on the contrary, he is God's superior. He brings Jehovah to his bar; convicts him of inadvertency and neglect in not having set up institutions, which man, with a view to supply his defects, has been obliged to devise; convicts him of mistake, in having proclaimed his church to be heavenly, when in reality it is still earthly; convicts him of falsehood, in proclaiming that salvation is of grace, when in reality it is conditional, or by works. Nay, man thus venturing to try the Creator, hesitates not to bring a direct charge of encouraging immorality against him; seeing that, while God proclaims eternal life as his gift, irrespective of man's works altogether, man, in order to protect the cause of sound morals and to promote the good of society, has been constrained to deny the assertion, and to maintain the necessity of avoiding evil and obeying the demands of law in order to obtain heavenly blessings. God thus is no longer God. Man has usurped his functions. God is so foolish, that he requires to be taught by man; is so neglectful, that he requires to have his mistakes rectified and repaired by man; nay, has acted in a way so diametrically opposed to

* *Sic volo; sic jubeo; stet pro ratione voluntas.*

man's best interests, as to have rendered himself obnoxious to the just condemnation of man!

Let it not be alleged that I am chargeable with any exaggeration in this matter.

The assumption of divine authority of which I now treat does not confine itself to man's pretending to enact and enforce decrees which are really divine. Even this would be presumption enough with a vengeance. It would be the creature supposing that his assistance was required by the Creator! It would be the creature, unsolicited to do so, venturing to obtrude this assistance on the Creator! It would be the creature placing himself on a footing of equality with the Creator! *Ego et rex meus* has generally been reckoned one of the most offensive exhibitions of human pride. But to say or act as if they said, "We human beings, taking into consideration God's inability of himself to make known his own character and enforce his own decrees, have kindly condescended to help him in this exigency, by giving to his revelation of himself the whole weight and sanction of our human authority," would surely be no slight advance on the language of the haughty English cardinal.

And yet even this, flagrant as the insult to God would be, comes vastly, I had almost said infinitely short of expressing the way and degree in which man's enmity to God has, since the days of the apostles, been displaying itself. Man does not now assert equality with God,—he claims to be God's superior. Not satisfied with condescending to assist God in the promulgation and enforcement of views which are actually divine, man now pronounces sentiments to be divine which, besides their having a mere human origin, stand directly opposed to the revealed word and will of God. He now asserts for humanly-devised and concocted falsehoods the prerogative of being received as divine truths. He pronounces *ex cathedrâ* fallible notions to be infallibly true; and thus,

in the exercise of his own presumed infallibility, uttering as true what is false, he tramples under foot as false the infallible truths of God.

This certainly is man shewing himself that he is God, and acting as God.

But some may be inclined to "lay the flattering unction to their souls," and say, "However applicable this charge may be to others, it has no relation to, no manner of bearing upon us. We at least can put our hands upon our hearts and disclaim the imputation of pretending to act as God."

"Thou art the man," said Nathan to David. "To you the charge of investing yourselves with divine prerogatives applies," say I to every body of individuals claiming to be a church of Christ upon earth.

Roman Catholic Popes and Councils, Greek Synods, Episcopal Convocations, Presbyterian General Assemblies, Lutheran Consistories, Methodist Conferences, Independent Unions, Baptist Associations, Sandemanian, and M'Leanite, and Walkerite churches—all, although consisting merely of fallible and uninspired men, are chargeable with presuming to act more or less, and in one respect or another, in the name and by the authority of God; and all are chargeable more or less, and in one respect or another, with superseding God's revelation of himself by their own human and fallible notions.

Is this denied? Then I ask,

What mean the claims of the Church of Rome, by her Popes and Œcumenical Councils, to issue infallible decrees?

What meaneth the imposing, by the Church of England, upon all her members of a professed belief in everything contained in her Thirty-nine Articles—these Articles being confessedly of mere human origin?

What means the requiring of subscription to the Westminster Confession of Faith, as the confession of their faith,

by the Church of Scotland, bond and free, and by various sects of presbyterian dissenters, from all who aspire to hold office in their respective communions ?

What means the authoritative subjugation of persons of the Lutheran persuasion to the Confession of Augsburg ?

What means the supreme importance attached to all the *dicta* of John Wesley by his followers, and the necessity of an unqualified adherence to these on the part of the members of his Annual Conference,—a body exercising a religious despotism scarcely inferior to that of the Councils of Nice, Constantinople, and Chalcedon, although with only the hoar of a century upon its head ?

What mean the various terms of communion, written and unwritten, imposed by petty sects of non-conformists upon their respective members—terms from which it is not permitted to them to deviate ?

Unquestionably these diversified forms of exercising ecclesiastical authority, if they have any meaning at all, all speak one plain, intelligible, unequivocal language, namely, that man has a right to act as sovereign over the consciences of his fellow-men.

But is this right actually possessed by any ?

Has God delegated to any man or body of men the power of acting authoritatively, either in his name or in their own, in matters of a religious nature ?

Supposing, for the sake of argument merely, every sentiment embodied in the various and self-contradictory creeds of so-called Christian churches to be correct, (a manifest impossibility of course,) the grand preliminary question demands an answer, and will not be staved off,—Who gave to these churches, to all of them, to any of them, the prerogative of issuing decrees, of enforcing articles, of pronouncing dogmatically on the subject of religion at all ?

True it is that all these religious bodies, and all similarly

constituted, act as if they had a divine warrant for their procedure,—act as if they were invested with divine authority. But for thus acting, when required to do so, they can produce no divine warrant or authority at all. Powers conferred on inspired apostles are no proofs to me, or to men like myself taught by the scriptures, of the same powers being conferred on uninspired popes, cardinals, and bishops. Powers possessed and exercised by apostolic churches, consisting of miraculously-endowed men, afford no proofs of the same powers being possessed and exercised by men voluntarily associating together, who are confessedly destitute of all miraculous influences. Nay, divine authority stands opposed to the rights and prerogatives assumed by all earthly religious bodies. To Jesus himself alone, without any deputies, any representatives, or any ambassadors, is now entrusted, and by himself alone is now exercised, *all power both in heaven and on earth*. Matt. xxviii. 18. Acts iii. 12—16. *Who hath required this at your hands?* is, under such circumstances, the stinging and unanswerable query which God proposes to all who venture to wield the divine authority.

And as such bodies set themselves above God, by usurping a divine authority which God declares does not belong to them, so do they likewise set themselves above God by presuming to substitute human falsehoods for divine truths. They may not all claim apostolic succession by imposition of hands for their bishops, infallibility for the decisions of their councils, and the power of retaining and remitting sins for their priests; they may not all in direct terms assert for their rules, canons, and ordinances, an origin that is divine, and enforce obedience to them by anathemas and threats of eternal damnation: but if they do not proceed to such a pitch of blasphemy as this, their whole procedure is blasphemous notwithstanding. They assert falsehoods, and they assert these falsehoods as if they were divine truths. Passing

by the *dicta* of established churches, and confining myself to the views in which all sects of those denominated Evangelical are found to agree, I observe:—In proclaiming it to be infallibly true that God has churches upon earth, that he hath appointed office bearers in these churches, and that to these office bearers is entrusted the administration of ordinances and the exercise of discipline—in maintaining the perpetual obligation of baptism and the Lord's supper—in assuming that God hath entrusted to earthly churches not only the edification of their individual members, but the spread of pure and undefiled religion throughout the world—in anticipating the advent of a period upon earth when all human beings, or a majority of human beings, shall become righteous and holy—and in a thousand other instances, Protestants, imitating their Popish neighbours, have no hesitation in acting as God. These views, they say, are true: infallibly true. That is, according to the notions of us, religious bodies, they are so; and we maintain that they are so. Unfortunately, however, for the pretensions of such religious bodies to infallibility, or to an infallible power of interpreting scripture, the notions entertained and promulgated by them, as to the topics just alluded to, although generally acquiesced in, all happen to be the reverse of true: they are all false. There are now no earthly churches of Christ, the church of Christ, since the days of the apostles, being a body entirely heavenly; there are now no earthly office bearers of christian churches, whether priests, clergy, ministers, preachers local or travelling, pastors, elders, or deacons; there are no external ordinances to administer, there is no external discipline to exercise: baptism with water, never obligatory upon the Gentiles, with the apostolic period passed away; and the Lord's supper, now that we live in the period of Christ's second coming, is no more; besides, that none now exist who are qualified for the dispensation of either.

The religion spread by man is impure and earthly like himself, God never having delegated to any one the communication of pure and heavenly religion, but reserving that to himself; and the exhibition of man's enmity to God, so far from decreasing, is increasing as time rolls on. So of other human dogmas. Yet man will have it that such dogmas, although opposed to what God hath revealed, are nevertheless true: aye, infallibly true. In maintaining them it is impossible, they say, that they can be mistaken. The scriptures,—that is, their own interpretations of the scriptures,—assert them. Thus do men put the truths of God under the feet of their own falsehoods. Thus do they sit promulgating and establishing human error, as if, forsooth, in so doing they were clothed with the divine attribute of infallibility. They, like their popish rival, sit in the temple of God, shewing themselves that they are God.

One thing, Papists and Protestants, Churchmen and Dissenters, all cordially agree in: they all hate, and authoritatively stigmatize as false, that present salvation of the whole human race in Christ, the second Adam, which is the grand divinely-revealed fact, 1 Cor. xv. 22, and which constitutes the gospel. Luke ii. 13, 14. To the salvation which God declares is freely and universally bestowed, they all concur in preferring, and so far as their authority can go sanctioning, a salvation which is in some way or another to be enjoyed conditionally, and of course only by those by whom the condition or conditions of enjoying it shall have been performed. The Scribes and Pharisees of old are charged with making void the law of God by their traditions. Their modern successors, influenced by the same spirit of enmity to God which dwelt and operated in their bosoms, try to make void the gospel of God, which proclaims eternal life as the gift of God to the whole human family in Christ, by a gospel of their own, which, retaining the words of the gospel, as the

Scribes and Pharisees of old did the words of the law, contrives nevertheless to render it worthless, by making God's gift to signify man's performance of conditions! Thus are matters inverted. Instead of man voluntarily submitting to have his mistakes rectified by God, he takes upon him, in the plenitude of his wisdom, to correct the mistakes into which, in his apprehension of things, Deity has been betrayed.

According to this fashion, then, does man's enmity to God now come out: in assuming superiority over God, by opposing to what God hath actually declared, views contradictory to his, for which, although having only a human origin, divine authority is pleaded; in assuming superiority over God, by thus superseding the word of God by the word of man.

All this assumption and exercise of divine authority in opposition to God on the part of man, falls to be traced, not merely to man's ambition, but also to man's abject submission. Never could enmity to God have shewn itself in all the magnitude of its proportions, unless man's disposition to assert an ascendancy over others in matters of religion, had been met and seconded by a disposition on the part of man to concede this ascendancy, and yield a willing obedience to it. Thus has all human authority, affecting a divine origin, been developed. Increasing numbers, influenced by spurious notions of Christianity, after the days of the apostles, voluntarily and slavishly submitting to their religious guides, gave birth to the Church of Rome. Power, wealth, and numbers combined, brought into existence Protestant established churches. And the voluntary associations of individuals have originated dissenting communities of every class and description. That is, the very authority in matters of religion which man now exercises,—the very authority which he now worships, and by which he feels his conscience now bound and constrained,—has actually, in one way or another, and at one time or another, been derived from himself. He is actually the

willing slave of his own self-originated and self-imposed institutions.

It used to be charged as matter of grave reproach against the Romish Church, that its Cardinals, after having in conclave elected a new Pope, fell down and worshipped him. Thus most absurdly, as well as blasphemously, doing homage to their own creature. *Quem creant, adorant.* The reproach is just. But are the absurdity and blasphemy of such procedure confined to them? Reflect for a moment. What happens in the case of every external association claiming to be a church of Christ? Are not all Protestant religious governing bodies, equally with Popes, Popish Cardinals, and Popish Councils, the mere creatures of man? Were not Cranmer, Knox, and Wesley all equally uninspired, —all equally destitute of miraculous gifts? Did not men yield them assistance, and invest them with authority, in the rearing and establishment of their respective religious communities? And are not Episcopal Convocations, Presbyterian General Assemblies, and Wesleyan Conferences, as well as all the governing bodies of different sects, by whatever name they may be called, thus clearly not of divine but of human origin? This being the case, Protestants of every class and description, in obeying the decrees emanating from such bodies, are actually obeying the decrees of their own creatures. And thus not more decidedly is idolatry chargeable against Papists, on the score of the reverence which they give to the bulls of Popes and the canons of Councils, than it is against Protestants, for their subjection to the authority of humanly constituted religious judicatories. The principle in all these cases is the same. *It is the voice of a god and not of a man*, shouted the obsequious multitude, when Herod, having made his appearance among them, arrayed in royal apparel, delivered an oration to them. Acts xii. 21, 22. “It

is the voice of God and not of man," say in effect Protestant sects, no less than the Papists, when they attach any importance whatever of a religious nature to the decrees and decisions pronounced by their various self-created ecclesiastical governments. Dare Protestants, once made aware of this, turn upon the church of Rome, and without a blush charge her with the crime of creature worship,—a crime in which, it appears, they are themselves to a most fearful extent participators?

The form in which man's enmity to God now displays itself is, we thus discover, the direct worship of self. Man, in various ways, elevates self, the god of this world, always God's enemy, at last to God's throne. Self thus to him is God. And self, having had conceded to it and having assumed divine authority, of course exercises that authority according to its own principles, and not according to principles which are heavenly and divine.

But self, or the mind of flesh, is enmity against God. Rom. viii. 7. Therefore, for self to act according to its own principles, is for it to act in opposition to divine principles; and self, always opposed to God, must, when taking possession of the throne of God, exhibit its opposition to him, whose throne it has usurped, in the highest possible degree.

And so it does.

God reigns by love.

Self reigns by law.

The reign of self, then, as the reign of law, stands opposed to the reign of God, as the reign of love.

That is, the representations of God as bestowing eternal life conditionally, or on the ground of compliance with terms prescribed, which self makes and proclaims, stand opposed to the declarations emitted by God himself, that he is bestowing eternal life unconditionally, and upon all, in Jesus Christ.

Self, the god of this world, is a law-giver; and is thus

the enemy of the God of scripture, the living and true God, who, on the ground of all law having been fulfilled by his own Son, is the Saviour.

But this is not all.

Self, as God, not merely withstands the word of God, proclaiming grace, but actually sets that word aside,—completely supersedes it,—and in its stead and on its ruins establishes the word of man, proclaiming a conditional salvation.

Thus is it that self reigns, and that, in the exercise of its usurped authority, it manifests itself to be God's enemy.

It reigns and it opposes God, not by leaving to God the exercise of a co-sovereignty with itself, but by superseding God's authority altogether, and by asserting a complete and unqualified superiority over him.

God has spoken, but self sets aside his declarations, in favour of words uttered by itself. God sets free; but self binds upon the shoulders of men burdens grievous and heavy to be borne. In a word, self, the mighty king of Daniel, *does according to his will, and exalts himself, and magnifies himself above every God, and speaks marvellous things against the God of gods, and prospers till the indignation be accomplished.* Dan. xi. 36.

And thus is the reign of self the reign of the man of sin. It is human nature, revealed as sinful in Adam, and revealed as still more sinful in the nation of the Jews, at last venturing to usurp the throne of God. And it is human nature, formerly revealed as sinful in breaking God's laws, at last revealed as sinful in assuming God's prerogative, and venturing to impose laws of its own. It is sin in its consummation. Man, once confessedly God's subject, can now be contented with nothing short of being God's superior; and, in the exercise of his usurped sovereignty, nothing will content him but the trampling of God's declarations of grace and mercy to the family of man underfoot.

Manifest it is that no higher degree of enmity to God is conceivable or possible than that of man presuming to act as God, and in that character superseding what God hath revealed by the views and suggestions of his own mind.

The punishment of such blasphemy is most appropriate.

We have already seen that man imposing conditions of the enjoyment of life everlasting upon himself, and denouncing everlasting punishment against himself in the event of his non-compliance with these self-imposed conditions,—all which is in direct opposition to God, who declares that he bestows eternal life freely—God is so far pleased to ratify the sentence pronounced by man upon himself as out of his own mouth to condemn him, by adjudging human nature, convicted of not fulfilling its own conditions of enjoying eternal happiness, to the punishment of everlasting destruction.

We have now to observe, in addition to the foregoing, that man, in the highest exercise and exhibition of enmity to God, assuming God's throne and venturing to wield God's authority, is most suitably punished, by God's revealing himself seated upon his own throne as King of kings and Lord of lords, and by his then and thereby swallowing up for ever in his own divine nature the rebellious nature of man, which has thus presumed to usurp his power and exercise his functions.

Man, the shadow, fancies that he is God, and ventures to “play fantastic tricks” as such. God, the substance, punishes the presumption of this shadow, by swallowing up his fancied existence and all his fancied authority in himself, and thus shews himself to be in reality what man is only in his own imagination, free, sovereign, and everlasting.

Adam attempting to rise to the character and dignity of God, in opposition to God, was punished by being cast down to the earth from which he had been taken. The Jews attempting to retain their rank and situation as temporally *gods*, John x. 34, 35, in opposition to God, were punished doubly: first, by

being deprived of what they already possessed ; and secondly, by being excluded from higher privileges. Man, however, since the apostolic period, improving upon the procedure of those who went before him, has attempted, in opposition to God, to act as God, and in this character and capacity to supersede God's authority by his own, trampling God's revelation of himself under the feet of his own self-imposed statutes ; in consequence of which he is punished by God superseding, not only his usurped power, but even his very creature existence, by that power and that life which are divine.

The corruptible and the mortal has ventured to think and act as only the incorruptible and the immortal is entitled to do ; has ventured to fancy itself God, and to act as such. It is punished by the incorruptible being put upon the corruptible, and the immortal upon the mortal ; or by the corruptible and mortal nature of Adam being superseded by and swallowed up in the incorruptible and immortal nature of God.

This undoubtedly is to human nature, in its own apprehension free, independent, and sovereign, punishment, and the severest of all punishment : but O, sweet consideration ! it is in reality to man himself love, and the highest exhibition and exercise of love.

Man's nature is enmity to God, and the result of its exhibiting itself to be such is the exhibition of enmity to man on the part of God. But what is God's enmity to man ? Hatred opposed to hatred ? No. It is the enmity of love opposed to the enmity of hate.

Man's hatred to God can never be satisfied until it has undeified God, by putting him under man's feet : God's love to man, assuming to man's eyes the appearance of hatred, can never be satisfied until, having superseded man's nature by God's nature, it has actually raised man to God's level.

That is, God actually accomplishes in a way of love to man that elevation of man to be as God which man, in the exercise

of hatred to God, had attempted to accomplish after a totally opposite fashion. Man, by sin, would have debased God to his own level : God, by righteousness, raises man to his own level.

God thus is *not overcome of evil, but overcomes evil with good.* Rom. xii. 21.

Man's nature was in Jesus Christ, after having been purified and perfected in him through his death and resurrection, exchanged for and elevated into the divine nature ; and this, as the highest display towards him of his heavenly Father's love. For it is the divine nature, and not human nature, that is qualified for the enjoyment of God in glory. So happens it to men themselves. Human nature at the best was fitted only for the enjoyments of time and sense ; and as sinful it has forfeited even these. How gracious, then, appears God in rendering the various exhibitions of man's enmity to himself, and the various punishments to which human nature is on these accounts appropriately subjected, subservient to the raising of those who are now imprisoned in human nature to the enjoyment of the liberty of the divine nature ; subservient to the raising of those who are now possessed of the sinful and dying nature of Adam to the possession of the righteous nature of his own Son, and thereby to the capacity of the everlasting enjoyment of himself ! Punishing human nature, he is thus actually blessing those who are groaning under the burden of that nature ; and the highest punishment of human nature, — inflicted upon it for the highest exhibition of enmity to himself, in having usurped his place and functions, by its being everlastingly swallowed up in the divine nature, — is thus seen to be actually the highest blessing of which man is susceptible. It is in the form of merited punishment for guilt, conceding to the guilty, perfect righteousness, perfect enjoyment, perfect life. ♡

CHAPTER III.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE GOSPEL BY THE MEMBERS OF
THE ELECTION OF GOD, AND OPPOSITION BOTH
TO THE ELECT AND THE DOCTRINE OF ELECTION
BY AN UNREGENERATE WORLD.

SECTION FIRST.

THE MANIFESTATION OF THE TRUTH TO THE ELECT BY GOD
HIMSELF THROUGH HIS WORD, OVERCOMES IN THEM THE
ENMITY TO THAT TRUTH WHICH IS NATURAL TO THEIR
MINDS. KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH, KNOWLEDGE OF
PERSONAL SALVATION. AN EXPOSURE OF THE MISTAKE
INTO WHICH PERSONS IGNORANT OF THE SUBJECT NECES-
SARILY FALL.

ALL, however, do not exhibit, or do not persevere in exhibiting, enmity to God by rejecting the gospel. On the contrary to some is the gospel made known, and by them is it welcomed as a message of light, liberty, and life everlasting.

To such the divine testimony is revealed as what it really is. The veil which formerly overhung its meaning, and concealed it from their view, is withdrawn. *The light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, shining in their hearts*, 2 Cor. iv. 6, they who *were sometime darkness*, are made *light in the Lord*. Eph. v. 8. They who formerly were enslaved by the ignorance, delusions,

and enmity of their own earthly nature, are now made to experience in themselves the truth of the Redeemer's words, *If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.* John viii. 36. And they who formerly were dead with Adam now find themselves *quicken'd together with Christ Jesus.* Eph. ii. 5.

Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. Matt. xiii. 9. This word of power, the same omnific word whose result was the creation of the world, Gen. i. 3, takes effect in the case of every one of the chosen few: the voice of God being heard by them addressing itself to their hearts and consciences. Christ *speaking* to them in another way than *he doth unto the world*, John xiv. 22, Matt. xiii. 11 — 13, his words are experienced by them to be indeed *spirit and life.* John vi. 63.

Salvation as proclaimed in scripture means of course deliverance. Deliverance from law, deliverance from sin, deliverance from death. Deliverance from human nature itself, that nature which is enmity against God. And deliverance from all these in him who is the Son of God. As the person whom divine law addressed, Jesus' obedience unto death, by not only satisfying law, but exhausting it, delivered from it. Rom. vii. 1 — 6, x. 4. As the person upon whom, although sinless himself, Heb. iv. 15, vii. 26, 1 Peter ii. 22, sin nevertheless took hold, Psalm li. 4, 5, Isaiah liii. 4 — 6, and by whom *sin*, in his atoning *sacrifice*, *was put away*, Heb. ix. 28, 1 Peter ii. 24, in him there is deliverance from it. Rom. iv. 25, vi. 2 — 11. As the person who swallowed up death in his resurrection from the dead and ascension to God's right hand, he likewise delivers from it. 1 Cor. xv. 22, 54, 2 Cor. v. 4, Rom. vi. 11, 13, viii. 11. And as he who, in his own personal resurrection from the dead, swallowed up human nature in the divine nature, John xvii. 5, Acts xiii. 33 — 35, is he the deliverer

from human nature in the case of others. 1 Cor. xv. 49, Phil. iii. 21, Rom. viii. 9—11. But he who thus triumphed over law, sin, and death, and gave deliverance from them by swallowing them up in love, righteousness, and life everlasting; he who triumphed over human nature itself, and gave deliverance from it by swallowing it up in the divine nature, is one with us. One with us as man; for he is bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh. Matt. i. 1—16, Luke iii. 23—38. One with us as God; *for in him we live, and move, and have our being.* Acts xvii. 28, Matt. i. 23. In delivering himself, then, from law, sin, and death, by his obedience unto death, descent into Hades, and resurrection, it is evident that he delivers us likewise, as one with him, from the same; so that in him we are loving, righteous, and immortal. Rom. vi. 1—13, indeed, throughout. In delivering himself from human nature by his sacrifice of it, and by swallowing it up in the divine nature, it is evident that he delivers us likewise, as one with him, from human nature; so that in him we are partakers of the divine nature. 2 Peter i. 4. *Because I live, ye shall live also,* are his own words. John xiv. 19. An abstract saviour or deliverer, that is, a saviour or deliverer without any necessary reference to us, Jesus therefore is not. He is *our* Saviour—he is *our* Deliverer.

This is the truth, the simple but glorious truth, which is carried home to the hearts and consciences of the chosen and privileged few by God himself. Salvation is recognised by them as what it really is, the work of God, and not the work of man. Isaiah xlv. 21—25. As so perfect, that no addition whatever can be made to it. John xix. 30, Rom. x. 4, Col. ii. 10. As enjoyed even now. John iii. 36, v. 24, xi. 25, 26, Rom. viii. 1, Eph. ii. 6. As enjoyed indefeasibly and for ever. Rom. viii. 31—39. As conferred, not on the ground of creature merit, but in spite of the total want of it; Titus

iii. 5; nay, as conferred on beings not merely in a negative point of view unworthy of it, but who, looked at positively, are so rootedly and essentially hostile to God, as to be undeserving of anything save everlasting destruction. Rom. v. 6—10, Matt. xxv. 46, 2 Thes. i. 9. Above all, salvation is recognised as belonging to us personally; all the members of the heavenly church knowing that in Jesus they themselves are saved with an everlasting salvation. Rom. viii. 15—17, 1 Cor. xv. 20—22, Gal. iii. 29, iv. 6, 2 Tim. iv. 8. Not that we rejoice in a personal salvation which belongs to us exclusively; for to do so would be pharisaical, and opposed to the gospel, which proclaims a fact in which all are interested: 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22, 1 Tim. ii. 4, 6: but that we are given to recognise salvation as personally ours, by Jesus enlightening us as spiritual Abraham, 1 Peter i. 23, 1 John v. 11, in opposition to *the world lying in wickedness*, who deny the fact, doubt it, or are indifferent about it; who, at the best, are striving to satisfy themselves of their interest in Christ, (a thing which they never can do,) instead of being satisfied that they have an everlasting interest in Christ upon the sole authority of God himself proclaiming the fact.

Salvation and the knowledge of salvation are it thus appears, to the members of the church, identical. God speaks to the hearts and consciences of his people, by revealing himself to them, not only as *the* Saviour, but as *their* Saviour. Indeed, it is in the character of being *their* Saviour that Christ is recognised by them for the first time, and recognised by them always, as addressing them. As *their* God—as *their* father—as *their* heavenly portion—as standing *to them* in an everlasting and indestructible relationship—is his word uniformly carried home to their minds with power. *My sheep hear MY voice.* John x. 3—5, 14, 16. They know him, as having been previously and everlastingly known by him. Gal. iv. 9; Rom. viii. 28—30; Titus i. 2, 3. Thus knowing

Jesus as *their* Saviour, and in no other character can he be known by the members of his church, they find themselves even already saved in their consciences from law, sin, and death. And thus enjoying in themselves the earnest of salvation or deliverance, even during their temporary sojourn in flesh, they know that they shall enjoy that salvation or deliverance completely, when, as possessed of glorified bodies and glorified minds, they shall be conformed completely to their glorified deliverer himself.

Salvation is God's gift, and those to whose minds the truth is opened up see it to be so. To them, as the gift of God, salvation is complete—salvation is certain. Salvation is enjoyed even now, as well as for ever. To them, as the gift of God, salvation is theirs.

Not, certainly, do the members of the Church of God possess a present and personal salvation to the eye of sense. For they are still, to all human apprehensions, undelivered from their bodies of flesh and blood, and from fleshly mind as inseparably connected with their corporeal tenements. Man's mind, however, is no judge at all, and no competent witness even, in matters where the truth and mind of God are concerned. John v. 34; viii. 15. 19; 1 Cor. ii. 14. Concerning all that is divine it is ignorant; to all that is divine it is opposed. Rom. viii. 7. In spite of all its confident decisions to the contrary, the earnest of salvation is actually, as a matter of fact, enjoyed within, by all the members of the heavenly church, in that partial deliverance from the darkness and enmity of fleshly mind which is the necessary result of the superinduction upon them of a certain measure of the light and love of divine mind. Gal. ii. 20. 2 Cor. v. 1—5.

Conditionality of every description, in regard to life everlasting, is thus from the minds of the members of the church removed. Rather is, in their minds, in the principle of unconditionality swallowed up. Their fleshly minds, it is

true, never could take hold of divine mind—the conditional never could take hold of the unconditional. 1 Cor. ii. 14. But divine mind, nevertheless, is able to take hold of fleshly mind; the unconditional of the conditional. Ibid. 10—12. 15. And this is what in their case has actually happened. The mind of man has, in so far as divine things are concerned, been, to a certain degree, in them swallowed up in the mind of God; or the conditional and the limited, to a certain degree, in the unconditional and the unlimited. The earnest of the mind of God has in their case been superinduced upon the mind of man. As the necessary consequence, the members of the church find themselves, to their great surprise, and yet to their inexpressible delight, one with Christ Jesus, the Creator glorified, the unconditional and unlimited one, by having a certain measure of his mind; and thereby find in themselves the conditional and limited views of religious matters, which they derived from their connexion with Adam, the creature, superseded by unconditional and unlimited views belonging to the divine nature of the second Adam, the Creator.

Here let it be observed, indeed urged and enforced, that the privilege of the members of the church now is not reconciliation but salvation. The church having in flesh been reconciled by the death of Christ, and she at the close of the apostolic ministry, which was also at the close of her fleshly state and of the period of reconciliation, having been glorified with her heavenly and previously glorified Bridegroom, reconciled was to her thenceforward out of the question. The members of the church were thenceforward saved by the life of Christ. Rom. v. 10. Glorified they now are, as Christ and the church are; glorified by being raised from the state of reconciliation to the state of salvation,—from the state of the churches on earth to the state of the church in heaven,—from the state in which the bride was before Christ came to

take her home to himself, to the state in which she now is; glorified, by being saved or delivered from their previously earthly and reconciled state, just as Jesus himself was by his personal ascension, and the church by her resurrection and ascension in him. In a word, only by being glorified with Christ and the church, or by being saved in them, can any now enjoy spiritual and heavenly blessings. Hence the gospel now is not in the form of the gospel of reconciliation, as it was when proclaimed by the apostles personally, 2 Cor. v. 18—20,—a gospel which, prescribing obedience to a command as indispensable to the enjoyment of blessings, was in a certain sense conditional; but is in the form of the gospel of salvation,—a gospel which, proclaiming the blessings of eternal life to be ours now, henceforth, and for ever,—ours irrespective altogether of what we may have been, are, or may be in ourselves,—ours independently of our compliance with terms of any and every description,—is, in the fullest and strictest sense of the term, unconditional. The same apostles who preached reconciliation by the blood of Christ, looked forward to the blessing of salvation by his life as speedily to be made known and realized in his members. Rom. v. 10. Ibid. xiii. 11. Phil. ii. 12, 13. Ibid. iii. 10—14. Jesus and his church, once both on earth reconciling and being reconciled, Rom. v. 11, 2 Cor. v. 18—21, Colos. i. 24, are now both in heaven glorified, and as such saved from earth, saved from law, sin, and death, and saved from all the other effects and consequences of their earthly state. Just so, those to whom the gospel is now revealed as what it is, the gospel of salvation, although by nature beings of earth like others, find themselves in their consciences glorified with Christ and his now glorified spouse, and in virtue of this their elevated and heavenly connexion, find themselves saved from earth, saved from law, sin, and death, and saved from all the other effects and consequences of their earthly state. In their consciences, I say: for, while

in flesh, the earnest of salvation is of course all they are capable of enjoying. The glorified and saved mind of Christ thus exactly corresponds to the glorified and saved minds of the members of his church, so far as this earnest of heavenly principle is conferred on them. And this exalted privilege the members of the church now enjoy, through the power of Christ's resurrection and ascension assimilating them to himself: the inferior privilege of reconciliation, which was the result of his conforming them to his death, being now superseded by the superior privilege of salvation, which is the result of his conforming them to his resurrection. Rom. v. 10. Phil. iii. 10—14. As one with Christ, and enlightened from above to know ourselves possessed of life everlasting in him as a matter of fact, we are more than reconciled—we are saved. Reconciled we should have been had we lived during the apostolic period, by obeying the law of faith; saved we are, as living since law in every form passed away, by having been taught from above to know ourselves risen and glorified with the risen and glorified Son of God. This is to experience the power of his resurrection. Phil iii. 10.

There is in connexion with this subject suggested to us a remarkable analogy, as well as contrast, between man's highest exhibition of enmity to God and highest endurance of punishment on the one hand, and the highest privilege which God can confer on the members of his church on earth, combined with the highest blessing which they can enjoy throughout eternity on the other. Disobedience to the command to believe evinced enmity to God, but enmity in an inferior degree; therefore its appropriate recompense was exclusion from the heavenly kingdom. Rejection of eternal life bestowed freely and universally by God on the creature, and a preference given to some self-devised scheme of conditional salvation, evinces enmity to God of the most malignant kind, and in the highest degree; therefore its appropriate punishment is

the highest possible, or the everlasting destruction, by means of the everlasting swallowing up in the divine nature, of the nature from which so awful an exhibition of opposition to God could emanate. Just so, on the other hand, the obedience of faith, as an inferior privilege, Heb. xi. *throughout*, stood connected with the inferior blessing of reconciliation. Rom. v. 10, 11. And the knowledge of Jesus as glorified, and of eternal life as conferred upon us freely, personally and presently in him, which is the highest conceivable and possible of all divine privileges to the church on earth, is accompanied with, or rather involves in itself, that highest of all spiritual and heavenly blessings, the sitting down with Christ upon his throne, and the concurring with him in that ultimate and complete subjugation of all things and persons to himself, which is the consummation of the reign of love. 1 Cor. xv. 23—28.

Many, it is to be hoped, have, in every age since the apostolic period, seen and enjoyed the privilege of a free, a present, and a personal salvation. But few writers, comparatively, have had even a glimpse of the exact nature and extent of this blessing. Sandeman, who saw clearly that the knowledge of God in Christ, as a spiritual principle, necessarily precedes the bringing forth of spiritual fruits, and who, with this mighty weapon of truth, assailed and overthrew the whole system of law-work as something spiritual preceding the knowledge of the gospel, not having known that the gospel is a declaration of eternal life, as bestowed universally as well as freely,—presently as well as for ever,—personally as well as upon others,—spoiled all that was otherwise excellent in his theory, by representing saving knowledge as merely a knowledge of Christ's death in behalf of the elect, leaving it to our own researches and procedure to find out afterwards, if we could, whether we ourselves belonged to the number of the elect or not. "Christ, I know, died for all the members

of his church, rendering their salvation absolutely and infallibly certain; but whether for me, or not, I am to make out for myself by the effects on me of which this knowledge (!) is productive."* This acutely-minded man, like thousands of others, was never able to apprehend the distinction between the proclaimed fact of Christ dying and rising again in behalf of all as the gospel, and the making of that known only to the church, with personal reference to themselves, as the import of the doctrine of election; he never appears to have had the slightest suspicion that a divine blessing revealed as bestowed freely, is necessarily revealed as bestowed on myself. Under the same blindness as to divine truth, Archibald M'Lean, of Edinburgh, John Walker, of Dublin, and a whole train of others who have slightly modified Sandeman's system, or who have taken it up at second or third hand, appear to labour. Conditional to all of them,—dependent in one way or another on our faith, love, and self-denied obedience,—is our personal interest in the gospel. A salvation free, personal, absolutely certain,—a salvation which is matter of fact, and secured to us in Christ alone,—not one of these men appears to have known.†

Wardlaw, of Glasgow, Brown, of Edinburgh, and Balmer, of Berwick, (Professors of Divinity, forsooth!) Rutherford, of Falkirk, Morrison, of Kilmarnock, *cum multis aliis*, labour

* See his interesting and most valuable letters on Hervey's *Theron and Aspasio*, throughout.

† John Glas was the founder of the system afterwards denominated Sandemanian. Perhaps few at the present day could be persuaded to wade through the four large octavo volumes of his works. And yet if they could they would find their labour amply repaid. His writings are dry and prolix, besides touching on many subjects the interest of which was to a certain degree local and temporary. His views as to the Book of Revelation are, as a whole, very far from being satisfactory to me. But his *King of Martyrs*, and some other of his productions, by their clear and sweet representations of the work of Christ as the *all in all* of salvation, have more than compensated me for the labour which I have undergone, and the sense of weariness which I have often experienced in making my way through his volumes.

under the most intense darkness in reference to the scripture doctrine of salvation. Let Dr. Wardlaw stand spokesman for the whole; for although there may be shades of difference between his views and those of the others just named and alluded to, they are substantially the same. In his "Discourses on the Nature and Extent of the Atonement of Christ," the Dr. informs us that what he contends for is the doctrine of "indefinite or universal atonement, with gracious sovereignty in its effectual application."* That is, Christ died for all,—actually died for all without a single exception; and yet this death of his only avails to the few foreknown from everlasting, upon whom God sees meet to bestow the knowledge of himself. Old-fashioned Calvinism, which maintains as one of the noted five points† that Christ shed his precious blood in behalf of the elect alone, the Dr. with his coadjutors of course blows to the winds. But what has he given us for it? A salvation certainly for all? God gracious to all the creatures whom he hath made? God telling truth to men when he informs them that the atonement hath been made for them all? Oh dear, no: Christ's blood was shed for all; but the blessings of his life he bestows only on a few. (One blunder: greater efficacy is, on this system, ascribed to Christ's death than is ascribed to his life; whereas, according to apostolic reasoning, Rom. v. 10, the fact is exactly the reverse.) Christ's blood, shed for all, is efficacious to me, if I embrace the gospel offer; and in that case only. (Salvation, then, is not of grace, but of works; for I am saved only if I take hold of Christ. Besides, on this system the blood of Christ was, in the case of thousands, aye of millions, shed in vain.) Christ's blood, shed for all, lays a foundation for making and pressing the gospel offer. (That is, Dr. W. confounds

* Wardlaw's *Discourses on the Nature and Extent of the Atonement of Christ*. p. 65. 2nd Thousand. Glasgow: 1843.

† *Acta Synodi Nationalis Dordrechtanæ*. Dordrecht imp. 1620.

the apostolic state, when the command to believe was issued, with the state of things which has succeeded, in which no such command exists; he ascribes to the clergy apostolic powers, in opposition to scripture limiting these to Christ's inspired ambassadors, and shewing that they were never intended for mere uninspired men; Acts viii. 18 — 23; and he does all that in him lies to blind still more those who are naturally blind already, by withdrawing their attention from the full, finished, and certain salvation which Christ hath wrought out, and which God proclaims to be theirs, to a salvation which can only become theirs in consequence of their taking hold of an offered Christ, or performing some other mysterious act of their own. He strives all he can not to magnify the salvation which is complete in Christ, but to induce men to become their own saviours.) Christ died for all, and men are required to believe this.—But then, a fact is withheld of supreme importance, namely, that in God's purpose myriads of those to whom Christ's dying for all is made known by the clergy, God secretly hath determined never shall believe it or be benefited by it, seeing that he hath secretly determined to bestow only on a few that opening of the eyes of the understanding by which alone divine truth can be apprehended, and to torment eternally those who are not happy enough to be included among the number of this chosen few. And the majority, thus tantalised with the offer of a salvation which it was never intended they should believe, resist the proclamation of the clergy,—modestly assumed to be God's proclamation,—under the influence of a nature which God himself hath bestowed upon them. That is, upon this system, God tells only a portion of truth, and that the least important for the individual to know; God acts the part of a juggler, holding up an apparent prize to view, but secretly withdrawing it from those whom he is publicly exhorting to strive for it; God confers eternal existence upon

sin, by eternally tormenting sinners; God is cruel, in eternally tormenting beings who are the mere creatures of his hand, and who with the nature which he gives them, and the knowledge of divine truth which he withholds from them, cannot act otherwise than they do; and God is foolish, in so far as he torments for ever a nature different from that by which sin was committed, seeing that sin was committed by a nature qualified to live in time, whereas it is punished in a nature qualified to live for ever. Now, all these dogmas, with the consequences annexed, as I have briefly endeavoured to point them out, we are required to receive as scriptural, on the authority of Dr. Wardlaw and his compeers! We are required, if we gulp down their views, to regard the God of truth, and love, and power, and wisdom, and justice, as deceitful—as revengeful—as defeated by the opposition of his creatures—as absurdly and childishly gratified by the punishment of a nature which never offended him—and as visiting sin which at the utmost deserves the destruction of human nature, with torments which it would require eternal existence, an attribute of the divine nature, to undergo! I scarcely have patience, I confess, with such outrageous misrepresentations of scripture and of the God of scripture. *God is love.* This single fact, divinely revealed and divinely true, evinces the falsehood of them all. Commend me to the old, systematic, hard Calvinism of our ancestors in preference to these modern crudities. Dr. Marshall has ably refuted and exposed some of Dr. Wardlaw's blunders, the latter gentleman having rendered the same kind service to those of his antagonist.—How simple the truth, as distinguished from the blunderings of all who are ignorant of it. Jesus died for all, Jesus also lives in behalf of all; the benefit of his death and resurrection, so far from being lost in the case of any, all shall ultimately and certainly enjoy; and by none shall the purposes of his love be frustrated, he not being overcome in

any case by the creature's evil, but overcoming the creature as evil by himself as good. Also, God is now permitting man to display his nature as enmity to God, that God may, in opposition to this, display his nature as love to man, — God's punishment of man for his enmity to himself being in reality and at bottom a display of love. How sweet and how true thus to see, that the whole procedure of God towards man has for its object to bring out and exhibit the divine nature as contrasted with human nature: not to lower God to man's level, by making man the subject of God's revenge, after being the frustrator of God's purposes; but to elevate man to God's level, by shewing him the object of God's love, as he is the partaker of God's nature, and this in spite of all the enmity which is by him towards God temporarily displayed.

John Barclay, of Edinburgh, better taught than any of his predecessors, and better taught even than the great majority of his successors, saw that a view of salvation as present and personal, as ours now and ours for ever, lies at the bottom of all true, spiritual, and heavenly religion.* “He who charges my conscience with guilt as one with Adam by means of his word, also discharges my conscience from guilt as one with Jesus by means of the same word,” was Barclay's grand, constant, and emphatic statement. And he also shewed that the knowledge of personal salvation, by which all those who are saved are distinguished, is neither the result of reasonings on their part, nor of their embracing offers made to them by the Creator, but springs directly and necessarily from the Creator communicating the knowledge of himself as his Saviour to the creature. Notwithstanding, the views of this worthy and God-taught man were far from being perfect respecting the point in question. Conditional views and

* Luther came remarkably near this view, without coming exactly up to it. To see an interest in Christ's work is, according to Luther, a blessing which we are to aim at, and seek to keep before us continually: to see an interest in Christ's work, is, according to Barclay, a blessing actually bestowed upon us.

language at variance with divine truth, and inconsistent even with his own system as a whole, lie scattered throughout his writings. He saw not the distinction between reconciliation and salvation ; between reconciliation as conditionally enjoyed through obedience to the law of faith, and salvation as a blessing connected with the performance of no act or duty whatever on the part of the creature. He saw not, at all events he says not, that the knowledge of Christ's righteousness and life as mine, which is the presently enjoyed earnest of salvation, is the result of his glorified as contradistinguished from his crucified state. He saw not, at least he says not, that it is not in the light of God charging my conscience with guilt in Adam, I am enabled to recognise him as discharging it from guilt in Jesus ; but, on the contrary, that it is in the light of God swallowing up in me the sense of guilt in Jesus' divine righteousness, I am enabled to see him justly bringing against me a charge of guilt in Adam. And confounding the manifestation of Jesus as spiritual Adam with his manifestation as spiritual Abraham, he saw not the manifestation of Jesus as spiritual Abraham, or head of the church, subservient to his manifestation as spiritual Adam, or head of all. But Barclay, in discovering that salvation is bestowed presently and personally in the very fact of its being bestowed unconditionally, saw something ; and having committed this his discovery to writing, blessed be God for the benefit which I, in common with many others, have derived from the hints, imperfect though they be, which he has thrown out.

SECTION SECOND.

ELECTION. DEADLY ENMITY TO THAT TRUTH CHERISHED
BY FLESHLY MIND.

What has gone before will, I hope, have prepared my readers for understanding the relation in which universal

salvation stands to particular election, — the relation in which the gospel stands to the present manifestation of the gospel.

All human beings have had sin taken away by the atoning sacrifice of the Son of God ; and all human beings are interested in his divine righteousness. In the case of all of them death is swallowed up in victory.

But it never was God's intention to bestow upon all during this time state the knowledge of these facts ; rather, it never was God's intention to overcome the enmity of all towards them : on the contrary, he from everlasting selected a very small number, as compared with the whole human family, into whose hearts alone the knowledge of Christ's death and resurrection, as facts in which they themselves were personally interested, should be conveyed, and upon whom alone should thus be conferred the earnest of the divine nature ; John xvii. 3 ; the native enmity of their minds to God being slain in the very act of their spiritual illumination.

The elect alone have Jesus presented to their minds from above as their Saviour, and are given to rejoice in him accordingly.

That is, Jesus is one with all human beings, or is spiritual Adam : and therefore as in Adam all sin, so in Jesus, as second Adam, all are righteous ; and as in Adam all die, so in Jesus, as second Adam, are all made alive.

But Jesus is revealed as one with all, only to a few during this time state ; or to a few only is the fact carried home with divine power, that they are righteous in Jesus' divine righteousness and living in Jesus' divine life. These does Jesus beget again, not with corruptible seed, but with the incorruptible seed of his own word. And thus to them, besides being what he is to all, second Adam, he is also second Abraham : imparting to them the privilege of being the anti-type of Israel of old ; rendering them members of his heavenly

church, and introducing them into the possession and enjoyment of his heavenly Canaan.

In those few favoured ones alone is darkness swallowed up of light, is enmity slain and swallowed up of love.

Hereby do we perceive the relation in which the gospel stands to the present manifestation of the gospel.

The gospel declares God's love to all, Gen. xii. 3; Luke ii. 10; and shall, therefore, through their ultimate new creation be made known ultimately to all, God's word necessarily in God's own time taking full effect. Isaiah xl. 8. lv. 10, 11. 1 Tim. ii. 4, 6. But the present manifestation of the gospel is confined to the members of the church, or the elect. John xvii. 20, 21. Rom. viii. 29, 30.

God speaks to all, and God therefore is heard ultimately by all. John v. 25—29. 1 Tim. ii. 6. While in bodies of flesh and blood, however, God only speaks to and is only heard by the elect. John x. 4, 16.

These elect ones are chosen of God, not of man or of themselves. Their election is from everlasting. They are fixed and definite, their body being susceptible neither of increase nor of diminution. Their election is the result solely of the divine good pleasure. It proceeds not on the ground of any merits which they may possess, or any works which they may perform: it depends not in any respect whatever on any natural superiority over others by which they may be distinguished. They are absolutely, sovereignly, and certainly chosen of God in Christ before the foundation of the world; and nothing can succeed in preventing them from seeing, enjoying, and reigning with Christ in his kingdom.

Calvinism in many respects as a system is erroneous.

Correct, however, is it in maintaining that it is the privilege of the elect alone to reign with Christ. Matt. xxv. 34. Luke xii. 32. And that from this privilege of reigning with him the rest, or non-elect, are for ever excluded. Matt. xxv. 46.

1 Cor. vi. 9. Ibid. xv. 50. Its grand error consists in not perceiving that all Christ's enemies being put under his feet, and under the feet of his church, Psalm cx. 1, 1 Cor. xv. 25, and his reign being the reign of love, 1 John iv. 8, as a matter of necessity the non-elect, although incapable of reigning, are nevertheless capable of being reigned over, and of having their evil natures overcome by and swallowed up in the good of the divine nature. Rom. xii. 20, 21. Heb. xii. 29, compared with Exod. iii. 2.

Thus is God's absolute and sovereign election of the members of his church, which is generally conceived to be inconsistent with universal salvation, actually the means through which he carries into effect his purposes of love and mercy towards all.*

And yet thus are we prepared for a new and additional view of man's enmity to God.

Man, we have seen, manifests his hatred of God by his hatred of the gospel, in which is declared God's love as being free, and as extending to all.

Man, we now remark, also manifests his hatred of God by his hatred of the doctrine of election, or of the revealed fact of God's confining the knowledge of himself during this present time state, and the enjoyment of himself in his kingdom, to the members of his church.

When God's love to all mankind in Christ Jesus, the second Adam—which is the gospel—is proclaimed, the pharisaical propensities of human nature are immediately stimulated into active hostility. Man's pride and man's self-righteousness feel dreadfully aggrieved by such a statement of matters. "What! am I, a man of standing in society—a man who

* This I have attempted to shew at length in my *Divine Inversion*. Indeed, without the knowledge of the doctrine of mutual opposition subsisting between the things of God and the things of men—without the knowledge especially of fleshly election being a narrowing and spiritual election a widening principle,—the whole scheme of heavenly and divine truth is involved in remediless obscurity and confusion.

attract to myself the universal and unqualified esteem of my fellow-men—am I in the heavenly state to be put upon a level with the vilest of the vile? *I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers; I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess;** and is it possible to suppose that I, thus excellent and thus distinguished, should in God's presence receive no better treatment than is accorded to publicans, harlots, and the rest of the scum of society? I have *borne the burden and heat of the day†*—I have laboured hard to win souls to Christ—I have been indefatigable in my exertions to promote the cause of Bible and Missionary Societies—I have even exposed my name to reproach for objects which I have deemed to be good and agreeable to God—and are those who have expended no labours on the Christian cause at all, or whose labours have been inferior to my own, to share with me, upon a footing of equality, in a reward which I had always supposed peculiar to those who are like-minded with myself? Are the impious and the ungodly, forsooth, to *shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever?* Dan. xii. 3. Away with such a representation of things. Such a consummation is not that which I aim at, and cannot consequently be that which God proposes."—In this way reasons, in this way concludes the native Pharisaism of the human heart. Enmity to God after this fashion is evinced especially by the pious upon fleshly principles.‡ How can they feel otherwise than they do towards a doctrine which, like the gospel, proclaims that as to the enjoyment of life everlasting there is no difference between one man and another? Towards a doctrine which, like the gospel, when any one of them ventures to express his astonishment that the humanly-righteous and the humanly-unrighteous should

* Luke xviii. 11, 12.

† Matt. xx. 12.

‡ Those whom my countryman Burns, no mean observer of mankind, and no mean judge of the human heart, denominates "the unco guid."

in the heavenly state be placed on a footing of equality, thus addresses him : *I will give unto this last even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own ? Is thine eye evil because I am good ?* Matt. xx. 14, 15.

But pharisaism is not the only principle of the human heart. Man's sadducean, that is, his lax and latitudinarian propensities are not less marked, natural, and prevalent. And therefore, when God's purpose to leave the majority of human beings during this time state to themselves, and to bestow divine illumination upon his own few chosen ones alone is revealed, man's enmity to God, in however different a fashion, is equally stirred up. "What right has God thus to act ? What is there, in the way of divine knowledge and privilege to which any one is entitled, to which I am not entitled likewise ? Why should God be supposed to enlighten the mind of another in time, and not enlighten mine ? I reject the idea, as at once unworthy of God and unworthy of man. God is not thus arbitrary. He leaves it to ourselves whether we shall know and love him or not, and in no way whatever interferes with the freedom and sovereignty of our wills." Such is the murmuring, such the rebellious language which the proclamation of the doctrine of election provokes on every hand. In vain are opposers informed that God in leaving them to themselves, as happens in the case of the vast majority of the human race, is even on their own principles doing them no injustice ; that they are violators of their own consciences, and therefore cannot claim that exemption from punishment which would be due only to abstainers from evil, much less claim those positive rewards which, if bestowed on a footing of merit, could only fall to the lot of the perfectly and divinely righteous ; that God bestows the knowledge of himself on the members of his church now, not as matter of right on their part, but of sovereignty on his ; that in this choice of some to know him-

self in time, and this passing by of others, there is merely afforded one illustration of that sovereignty which is visible throughout nature in the dispensation of God's favours to his creatures; and that his procedure in this as in every other respect is actually dictated by love, both their own present opposition to the gospel, and the present enlightening of the minds of the elect, being subservient to that complete manifestation of God in which the complete enjoyment of life everlasting consists: I say, in vain are these and similar arguments employed and urged. Man's enmity to the absolute and sovereign election on God's part of the members of the church, as one phase and exhibition of his enmity to God, must come out, and was by God, in the making of this doctrine known, intended to be brought out. It completes the manifestation of man's enmity to his Creator. And after having exhausted every other argument in dealing with the state of mind thus evinced,—nay, perhaps without having recourse to any other argument at all,—we find it most convenient, proper, and emphatic, to meet it after the manner of the apostle: *Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest* against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?* Rom. ix. 20. God's election of his church is, like his salvation of all, matter of divinely-revealed fact. We who know the truth can see most glorious and substantial reasons for the one as well as for the other. But thou who knowest not God must just be left to exhibit thine enmity to God, in hating the doctrine of his sovereign electing love, unless that sovereign and electing grace which thou so hatest interpose to overcome this thine enmity, and, by illuminating thine understanding, set thee free from the bondage of human nature, and introduce thee into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

When our blessed Lord at Nazareth, after reading a portion

* *Disputest.*

the sixty-first chapter of the prophecies of Isaiah, declared, *This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears,—all, we are informed, bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.* Luke iv. 16—22. But Jesus knew the hearts of his auditory. Under the aspect of love to him and delight in his doctrine there lurked the most deep-rooted and intense enmity to both. This he resolved to expose. For that purpose he set before them, in a few brief and pointed examples, the doctrine of God's sovereignty, as manifested in election. Not more potent was ever the touch of magician's wand than was this address on Christ's part. It dissolved at once the spell of applause and apparent attachment to himself by which his hearers had previously been bound. Human nature in them immediately displayed itself in its true colours. Their latent, and to themselves unknown hatred to Jesus was drawn out through hatred to his doctrine. Nothing could now satisfy them but the death of their so recently admired instructor; and nothing could now restrain their murderous propensities. *And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill, whereon their city is built, that they might cast him down headlong. But he, passing through the midst of them, went his way.* Luke iv. 28—30.

Such is man. He hates God. No matter what may be the way in which God reveals himself. If as the Saviour of the world, one—if as the Elector of his church, another set of propensities adverse to the divine character are drawn forth and stimulated into exercise. Perhaps of the two the feelings of enmity excited by the display and declaration of God's electing love, although frequently smoothed down by an affectation of mildness and candour, are by far the stronger, as well as the more constant.

Not but that some men are able, even by dint of their fleshly

intellects, to understand and relish an atonement made in behalf of all. Not but that others are able by the same means to understand and relish an election to salvation of a small portion of the human race. For universal redemption on the one hand, and particular salvation on the other, are doctrines which have been and are professed by men who evidently have not been taught from above. Minds destitute of scriptural notions of the evil and magnitude of sin, and knowing nothing of that perfect impossibility of acquiring a right to heavenly blessings which is clearly and exclusively implied in the fact of having forfeited earthly blessings, may readily give into the one ; while minds of a harsher and haughtier description,—minds proud of some superiority over others which they conceive themselves to possess,—may be found as readily to give into the other. A Pelagius, a Loyola, an Arminius, a Whitby, or a Wardlaw will be, each after his own separate fashion, found contending for a universal atonement, provided that the universality of the atonement only lead to and terminate in a particular salvation. And an Augustin, a Calvin, a Knox, and a Toplady will be, each after his separate fashion, contending for the sovereign election and particular redemption of a few, provided that the chosen few constitute a *cul-de-sac*, that God's purposes of mercy stop with them, and that their blessedness lead to nothing ulterior. Man's fleshly mind is, on the one principle, gratified to think that he may by one means or another—by the performance of good works or by the acceptance of an offered Christ—extricate himself from the general mass of human beings, and raise himself to glory ; man's fleshly mind is, on the other principle, equally gratified to think that from eternity exclusive heavenly privileges and enjoyments were destined for him—privileges and enjoyments which shall enable him to triumph in sin's eternal reign, and in the torments endured for ever by those over whom sin's reign is eternally perpetuated. The worldly amiable

and the worldly harsh,—the supporters of the doctrine which makes God an impotent fool, unable to accomplish from man's successful resistance what his heart is set on,—and the supporters of the doctrine which makes God a cruel and vindictive tyrant, who, rather than that his purposes of severity against man shall be frustrated, confers eternal existence upon sin—divide the great body of religious professors between them. To see universal salvation and particular election each in its proper place, and both concurring to accomplish the divine purposes, is not for mere fleshly mind to attain to. He must be taught from above who is enabled to perceive, not as a humanly-devised theory but as a divine truth, Christ atoning for and Christ saving the whole human family, and Christ by his Spirit proclaiming this as gospel; as also to perceive in the light of this fact being carried home with personal application to his own heart and conscience,—in the light of his seeing his own sins atoned for and himself saved by Christ,—that there is a particular election of the church through which God's love to all in Christ is carried into effect. Rather, he must be taught from above who being given to perceive that Christ's death in behalf of all is death in behalf of himself, and that Christ's life in behalf of all is life in behalf of himself, and that this knowledge, sovereignly conferred on himself, is knowledge sovereignly conferred on him in common only with a few specially chosen of God in Christ before the world began, is given in the light of this election of himself and the other members of the church, to perceive his heavenly Father providing the glorious, blessed, and efficacious means of extending the benefits of Christ's atoning sacrifice and everlasting salvation ultimately to all.

Thus, then, is that enmity of the human heart to God, which makes its appearance in its highest form in opposing God's proclamation of salvation and eternal life as unconditionally bestowed on all, seen, in inseparable connexion with this, to come out also in opposing the manifestation of the

truth of their own personal enjoyment of salvation and life everlasting as during the time state being confined to the few who from everlasting have been foreknown and chosen of God, and in thus opposing the election of the church as constituting the only channel through which God's manifestation of the truth to all is destined to be carried into effect.

And thus is God, except in the case of the elect, seen to permit the enmity of the world to himself in this third and last state of things to exhibit its existence and operation to the utmost possible extent.

SECTION THIRD.

NO LAW IN THE SHAPE EITHER OF PROHIBITION OR COMMAND ADDRESSED NOW BY GOD HIMSELF TO FLESHLY MIND. THE HIGHEST LAW TO WHICH UNREGENERATE MEN NOW ARE SUBJECT IS THE LAW OF FLESHLY CONSCIENCE—THE HIGHEST PRINCIPLE OF MAN'S FLESHLY NATURE: A PRINCIPLE ESSENTIALLY OPPOSED TO SPIRITUAL CONSCIENCE AND THE DIVINE NATURE, BUT SUSCEPTIBLE OF THE MOST EXTRAORDINARY NEGATIVE, EARTHLY, AND FLESHLY ILLUMINATION, AND CAPABLE OF ISSUING AS DIVINE LAWS WHAT FORMERLY WERE SO, BUT ARE NOW MERELY LAWS OF ITS OWN, AS WELL AS OF CONVERTING INTO PRETENDED DIVINE LAWS WHAT GOD HIMSELF REVEALS AS DIVINE PRIVILEGES.

I have remarked that in this third, present, and last experiment which God is making upon human nature, with a view to the bringing out of its enmity to himself in the highest and most intense form of which that enmity is susceptible, he is addressing no direct and positive law to man. So far from his doing so, the experiment consists in his merely declaring a matter of fact. Salvation he proclaims is complete in Christ Jesus; eternal life he proclaims is freely and universally

bestowed and enjoyed in this the Son of his love. There is no command to believe this. There is no prohibition against disbelieving it. Salvation is enjoyed in earnest even now by the members of the church, in consequence of the divinely-revealed fact that Jesus is their Saviour being rendered true to their minds, that is, in consequence of their minds being rendered passive recipients of it. Enmity on the part of fleshly mind is now displayed, not merely in human beings actively rejecting the divinely-authenticated fact that *God hath given to them eternal life, and that this life is in his Son*, thereby *making God a liar*, 1 John v. 10, 11, but in their setting up in opposition to it systems of their own devising, in which heavenly blessings are represented as bestowed conditionally, or on the performance by the creature of certain prescribed terms. The creature displays its enmity to God in opposing to the fact which God hath revealed some one false system or another of its own; and in then rendering a homage, as if they were divine, to laws and institutions which are the mere offspring, coinage, and workmanship of the fleshly mind.

The promulgation and enforcement of any divine law, requiring to be obeyed in order to the attainment of heavenly blessings, is then, in the present experiment which is being made by God on man, altogether out of the question. Divine law now imposed would indeed interfere and be directly at variance with the nature of the experiment.

Mankind in general, since the close of the apostolic ministry, have been subject to no other and to no higher law than that of their own nature. Corporeally they are subject to the law of flesh and blood, or to the conditions of a creature constituted physically as man is.* Mentally they are subject to

* Without pledging myself to an unqualified admission of all his alleged facts, and guarding myself against being understood to acquiesce in his insinuated religious conclusions, the observations on the natural laws made by Mr. George Combe, in his *Constitution of Man*, may be advantageously recommended to the notice of my readers.

the laws of a fleshly intellect, or to the conditions necessarily implied in the constitution of a mind which is bounded on every hand and in every point of view by its connexion with its clay tenement. And morally and religiously they are subject to the law of fleshly conscience, or to that principle which binds and limits in restraining from evil, and which is the highest and dominant faculty of man's nature. This faculty, bounded and limited although it be, and binding and limiting as it does, is nevertheless capable of almost indefinite expansion and illumination, especially from the scriptures. Not of spiritual illumination; for that, so far as it goes, is always destructive of natural or fleshly conscience. Spiritual illumination is the superinduction of the earnest of a substantial and divine principle upon that which is merely shadowy and human; and therefore, so far as it extends, swallowing up fleshly conscience in itself, it creates in its stead, and at its expense, the earnest of a spiritual and divine conscience. Human error, the result of bounded human mind, is, in other words, always so far as spiritual illumination reaches, destroyed in the light and blaze of divine truth. When I say, then, that fleshly conscience is susceptible of indefinite illumination from the scriptures, I speak not of spiritual illumination, which is destructive of fleshly conscience, but of illumination upon its own fleshly principles. Natural conscience is, or implies, a certain species of light; although as compared, or rather as contrasted, with spiritual conscience, its utmost boasted light is seen to be darkness. Matt. vi. 23. Ephes. v. 8.* This light of fleshly conscience

* To understand the principle of this, read with care 2 Cor. iii. 6—11, and then reflecting that whatever during the night may be the light of the moon and stars, it is eclipsed and extinguished during the day by the light of the sun, perhaps it may occur that however useful and valuable may be the light of fleshly conscience while we are destitute of any superior principle, the rising upon our minds *of the Sun of righteousness, with healing under his*

has been on the increase under the indirect and negative (not the direct and positive, for that produces spiritual illumination and spiritual conscience,) influence of the scriptures from the days of the apostles downwards; and it will continue more and more to increase till the end of time. Natural conscience thus enlightened distinguishes modern from ancient times, — distinguishes favourably the civilization of Great Britain from the boasted civilization of Greece and Rome. It is the source of more humanized manners. It has given birth to a higher and more improved tone of morals. It has ameliorated, and is ameliorating, the laws of states and the institutions of society. Nay, what is more, to natural conscience is to be traced the origin of what are commonly denominated systems of Christianity: man enlightened on his own principles, not God imparting the light of divine truth and thereby superseding human principles, having concocted such theories; and thus, consequently, however numerous may be the sects and parties into which professors of religion may be divided, all exhibiting the impress, not of the mind of God, but of the mind of man.* To sum up all in a few words, looking at matters under a moral and religious aspect, natural conscience is the principle which gives law supremely to man. True, as being a faculty of mere fleshly mind, natural conscience stands opposed to spiritual conscience; and the more enlightened negatively, or on its own principles, natural conscience is, the more marked and inveterate is its opposition to spiritual conscience, or to conscience enlightened positively on divine principles, or to the mind of

wings, is necessarily attended with the eclipsing and extinguishing, with the swallowing up indeed, so far as the divine light extends and prevails, of the inferior human light in which, for want of a better, we formerly rejoiced.

* Some human systems of religion no doubt exhibiting a nearer approach to divine truth than others. And in a few cases where God through his word has been the teacher, divine principles to a certain degree being laid down as the basis, and divine conclusions to a certain degree being deduced from them.

God as having taken hold of and superseded the mind of man, found to be. Natural conscience prescribes laws, terms, or conditions of salvation to be fulfilled by ourselves; and the more enlightened on its own principles it becomes to understand the nature and extent of the law of God, the more numerous and the harder are the laws, terms, or conditions which it prescribes.* Spiritual conscience is the mind rejoicing in the knowledge of a salvation which has been freely bestowed upon it, in consequence of all the conditions prescribed by divine law having been fulfilled by the Son of God; and as it progresses, is that mind rejoicing more and more in the *liberty wherewith Christ hath made it free*. Natural conscience being thus in its very constitution, as well as in the judgments which it pronounces, *conditional*, necessarily stands opposed, and that with an enmity of the deadliest kind, to spiritual conscience, or to the mind of God in the creature revealing salvation as *unconditionally* bestowed and enjoyed. Opposed, however, although natural conscience be essentially to God, it is nevertheless strictly consistent with human nature as a whole, which is itself essentially opposed to God. Therefore it is, that if conscience assume to act as God, by acting as man's law-giver, it finds in man a being perfectly prepared, from the very constitution of his nature, to submit to its decisions. For although God, since the days of the apostles, has discontinued imposing any laws of a positive kind upon man, still, man being subject to the law of his nature, that nature requiring the exercise of authority, and fleshly conscience enlightened upon fleshly principles by the word of God possessing the right to exercise authority over man by being the highest and predominant faculty of his nature, it so happens that fleshly conscience is, in the absence of divine and spiritual knowledge, that is, in the case of all the unre-

* See in proof of this the well-known work of Thomas à Kempis, on *The Imitation of Christ*, and works of a similar description.

generate, necessarily submitted to by human beings as if its voice were to them the voice of God.

The knowledge of the gospel, or of the glad tidings that life everlasting is unconditionally bestowed upon us and is ours, is, from its very nature, to us to whom it is vouchsafed, the setting of our minds and consciences free from the operation of law altogether. And this, whether it be the law of God or law of man. The gospel is not now a law given forth in the shape of a command, as is commonly supposed, and as it unquestionably was during the reconciliation state or period of the apostolic ministry, but is, as I have had occasion to repeat again and again, the manifestation or making known of a divine fact. It is the causing of heavenly light to shine into the mind by God himself. And the fact which in this light is made known, is the nature and character of God as revealed in Jesus Christ; together with the oneness of the individual to whom the fact is made known with God in Christ. Consequently, whatever Jesus is made known as being, to the creature it is made known that he as one with Jesus is likewise. But Jesus is now subject to no law or condition. This no doubt he was of necessity while in flesh. For then he was *made under the law*, Gal. iv. 4, and *came to do God's will*, Psalm xl. 7, 8, Heb. x. 7; that is, to be submissive to his authority. But in rising from the dead, and as having been then born again by being clothed upon with the divine nature, John iii. 3. 5, Acts xiii. 33—35, Rom. i. 4, he swallowed up in himself law and conditionality of every description. Rom. vi. 9; 1 Cor. xv. 54. As love—for God is love, and Christ is God—not as subject to law, he now lives and reigns for evermore. Now, love is principle, not law; that is, it *constrains*, 2 Cor. v. 14, 15, not *restrains*, 1 Tim. i. 9, 10. And as what Jesus now is, the person to whom his character is made known is shewn in him to be; and as Jesus is love, not subject to law, or as Jesus, having

fulfilled and exhausted every condition, has swallowed up the very principle of conditionality in himself, so is it with every saved member of Jesus' church. Into his conscience is introduced, with the knowledge of Jesus, the principle of love. Rather, in the earnest of love, his natural conscience, necessarily subject to law, begins to be swallowed up. He finds himself, through the divine knowledge imparted to him, one with the glorified Jesus. The divine experience of his head, as set free from law, and triumphant over it by his obedience unto death, is, through his oneness with his head, found to be even already his own. And in this consciousness of emancipation from law, through its being swallowed up in love,—in the consciousness of all conditions of life everlasting having been exhausted by their fulfilment on the part of the Son of God, and of life everlasting being thereby his unconditionally—and in the consciousness of possessing other privileges of a similar kind, in which he is, even while in flesh, conformed to the glorified Son of God—consists his enjoyment of the earnest of complete and everlasting salvation.

What, however, is freedom from bondage to the individual himself who is taught from above,—to him whom the Son of God, by enlightening his understanding, hath made *free indeed*, John viii. 36,—in no respect whatever alters, or even affects the constitution and obligations of mere human nature. That being conditional is necessarily in him who knows the truth, no less than in him who knows it not, the bond-slave of law, and can only be dealt with on the footing of restraint, enforced by the sanction of punishment, 1 Tim. i. 9, 10, as preliminary to its final and everlasting destruction. Gal. iv. 24. 30; 1 Cor. vi. 13. Under restraint, the restraint of circumstances, and especially of fleshly conscience, human nature in the unregenerate is placed; under restraint, although the restraint of higher principles, human nature in the regenerate is placed likewise. Love, while

in so far as life everlasting is concerned, it sets the member of the spiritual and heavenly church free from natural conscience, and from the obligations of law, or in other words, while it confers upon him the enjoyment of the earnest of salvation, forms in him, at the same time, a new, spiritual, and divine conscience, which *working no ill to his neighbour*, Rom. xiii. 8—10, and bringing forth fruits of a new, spiritual, and divine description, Gal. v. 22, 23, shews the superiority of a principle which always and necessarily *constrains to good*, as love does, 2 Cor. v. 14, 15, over a principle which at the utmost is calculated merely to *restrain from evil*, as law is. 1 Tim. i. 9, 10. Such is the superiority of the divine nature, viewed as a practical principle, over human nature; and so utterly impossible is it that, in so far as the divine nature operates, it can either lead to or encourage licentiousness. If it bring forth fruits peculiar to itself,—fruits of which human nature has no conception, and to the production of which human nature cannot rise,—it is likewise the grand law imposed by God, in the minds of the members of his church, upon human nature; the grand restrainer of the flesh from the perpetration of those acts, and the performance of those works to which it is naturally and necessarily prone. Gal. v. 19—21, 24.

“Talk they of morals? O, thou bleeding Lamb,
The grand morality is love of thee!”

Love is, indeed, to use the apostle James' phrase, *the perfect law of liberty*. James i. 25. It is *the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, setting free from the law of sin and death*. Rom. viii. 2. As such it constrained Abraham to overcome the feelings of a parent; Gen. xxii. 10; Rahab, the duties of a subject and a good citizen; Joshua ii. 1—22; and a greater than either, attachment to his own pure and perfect creature nature; Luke xxii. 42;

John xix. 30 : that is, it overcame in all of them principles which naturally and necessarily characterise a being constituted like man ; or, by its constraining influence, it overcame principles which can do no more at the utmost than restrain man within the limits of a bare compliance with a legally prescribed sense of duty. James ii. 21—25, Psalm xl. 8, John x. 18, Heb. xii. 1, 2. Notwithstanding all this power of heavenly truth, however, in him who is a child of God, and upon whom has been conferred also the earnest of heavenly love, divine principles, it is to be recollected, are not during his time state the only ones by which he is actuated. On the contrary, he is still a being of flesh and blood ; carrying about with him a nature which in him, as in others, is enmity against God—a nature which, so far from relishing the earnest of the divine nature conferred on him, or the source from which that earnest springs and by which it is maintained, absolutely hates the divine nature, lusts against it, and struggles to get free from its yoke. Rom. vii. 18—23, Gal. v. 17. The divine nature of Christ, human nature has a sort of instinctive feeling, aims at and will succeed in accomplishing its destruction. That is, while man flatters man, and would fain flatter himself, with the prospect of human nature being ultimately susceptible of such a degree of improvement and cultivation in the creature, as to qualify it for exaltation to a higher, even a heavenly state of existence ; man's fleshly conscience instinctively suggests to him the very reverse :—instinctively suggests to him that so far from the improvement and cultivation of human nature tending to its being everlastingly perpetuated, the divine nature is in spite of all this destined to be ultimately human nature's destroyer. What, opposed to God as man's nature is, and with such powerful grounds of aversion to God's nature as we have been just adverting to, can be the result, but an increasing experience in those upon whom the earnest of the

divine nature has been conferred, of hatred on the part of human nature in them to that heavenly principle; of a resistance to it, indeed, on the part of earthly principles of which they are possessed, the most intense, persevering, and virulent? Rom. vii. 14 — 19. What but a series of malignant efforts to effectuate if possible the destruction of its destroyer can human nature actuated by a selfish desire to perpetuate for ever its own existence, give birth to? Gal. v. 17. Hence in the members of the church stirrings of flesh of every description. Hence promptings of them to set up human, external, and conventional morality, produced by the restraints of law, in opposition to those *fruits of the spirit* which alone spring from the conscience set free by love. Hence incessant suggestions contradicting the truth of a free salvation, founded on the fact of our being naturally earthly, sinful, and undeserving of spiritual blessings; as if creature guilt could frustrate the divine purpose to bestow freely divine righteousness,—as if creature guilt had not been atoned for by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ,—as if creature guilt were not the very means of affording the opportunity for the display of the divine mercy, and were not the very principle which the gospel of necessity and everywhere presupposes. Thus acting,—thus incessantly and necessarily opposing the truth,—how is mere human nature in the members of the church dealt with? Why, just as in the unregenerate. Just as it can be, and just as it deserves to be. It is fitted only at the utmost to be restrained from evil, and it deserves only to be restrained from evil while it lasts. Positive good it not only never has produced, and never can produce,—good being solely the produce of the divine nature, Matt. xix. 17, Rom. xiii. 10, Gal. v. 22, 23,—but evil, as opposed to God essentially and necessarily, is its grand characteristic. Rom. viii. 7. Against human nature and its propensities, whether these be *lusts of the flesh* or of the mind, Eph. ii. 3, we require to be con-

tinually on our guard; human nature and its propensities require to be continually under restraint. Eph. v. 15, Gal. v. 24. Liberty from human nature, the enjoyment of the earnest of which is implied in every case where *the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus* has been conferred, it is above all things desirable for us to bear in mind, is not liberty to indulge human nature. Rom. vi. 6. 15—22. Such liberty were bondage indeed. 2 Peter ii. 19. That liberty from human nature which is more or less the privilege of every child of God, is at every step, and in every stage of its progress, so far as it goes, the destruction or superseding of human nature; beginning at the moment of the ignorance and hatred of the human mind respecting divine things being to a certain degree swallowed up in the knowledge and love of the divine nature; and running on until the period when human nature, in its existence, qualities, and consequences, shall be swallowed up altogether in the divine nature,—until the period when, as we have borne completely the image of the earthy, or the nature which is enmity against God, we shall also bear completely the image of the heavenly, or that nature of love in which the nature of enmity is thoroughly and for ever swallowed up. 1 Cor. xv. 49. 54.

Having carefully and maturely reflected on the contents of this chapter, the scripturally taught and spiritually enlightened mind may be enabled to perceive that there are involved in it the following propositions:—

First. That enmity to God, common to all human beings naturally, and brought out since the destruction of Jerusalem especially in the form of opposing God's declaration that he bestows eternal life through his own Son's death and resurrection freely and upon all, is, in the case of a certain number of mankind, overcome by God's manifestation to them of the origin and truth of what he hath declared, in the light of his

manifestation to them of their own personal enjoyment of eternal life, through their own personal interest in Christ's death and resurrection. The overcoming of the enmity in their case not in any respect whatever interfering with the exercise and display of that enmity on the part of the great majority, but on the contrary tending towards the bringing out of that enmity on their part with increasing fulness and inveteracy of manifestation.

Secondly. That the persons to whom during this time state the manifestation of their being saved in Jesus is thus divinely made constitute the election of God: they having been sovereignly chosen of God in Christ to be the recipients of this manifestation before the foundation of the world; and the manifestation taking place in due time to every one of them, and to none besides them.

Thirdly. That the manifestation to the members of the church, by which their native enmity to God is overcome, is not the whisper to them of any private spirit, or the communication to them of a truth different from that which God is in the scriptures proclaiming to all, and will ultimately carry home to and render effectual in the case of all; but is merely the manifestation, and thereby the application to them personally, of the *common salvation*. Jude 3. God in Christ declares himself in the gospel to be one with all, the Saviour of all, and the bestower of eternal life freely upon all, or declares himself to be second and spiritual Adam; and God in Christ, in the manifestation of the truth of this gospel to the elect, or in the carrying home of that with personal application to themselves which he declares generally in regard to all, manifests himself to them to be second or spiritual Adam, by acting towards them the part of second or spiritual Abraham. As second Adam, or Saviour of all, he is proclaimed in the gospel and believed in by his church; as second Abraham, or Saviour of his church, he carries the

general proclamation with particular and personal application home to every member of it,—thus begetting them again by his word of truth, and introducing them even in this time state into the enjoyment of the blessings of his heavenly kingdom.

Fourthly. That the principle of enmity to God, drawn out by the proclamation of God's love to man in Christ as free and universal,—drawn out by the proclamation that eternal life is freely bestowed upon all as a matter of fact,—is still farther drawn out by the additional fact revealed in scripture of God's confining the manifestation of himself, during the continuance of time, to those whom he hath from everlasting sovereignly elected to be the recipients of this manifestation. God never offering the gospel to any, never commanding the gospel to be believed by any, never tantalising any with the notion that they have the power to come to him if they will. God, on the contrary, merely proclaiming a truth which all men naturally hate,—in due time overcoming the hatred of those whom he hath foreknown and chosen in Christ to that truth,—and thereby stimulating a hatred to himself over and above that which human beings cherish naturally and necessarily towards the glorious gospel.

Fifthly. That man's enmity to God, although once laid under the restraint of a simple divine law of prohibition, and afterwards once subjected to the control of a divine law of command, is now subjected to no positive divine law or statute whatever: God's present experiment upon man consisting in, and being made through the medium of abstinence from the issuing of every such law. And that, therefore, the only laws by which man's enmity to God is now bound, restrained, and controlled, are, in the case of the unregenerate, the law or constitution of human nature itself, in whatever way that nature may put forth its binding, restrain-

ing, and controlling influence; and in the case of the regenerate is, in addition to the foregoing, and in certain respects as superseding it, the knowledge of God in Christ, or the knowledge of the gospel itself, which, while to the conscience it is the imparting of perfect liberty, setting it free from ignorance of God, enmity to God, and other human principles, is to the body or human nature the bringing of it under a control, bondage, and discipline, such as fleshly mind can form no conception of, and such as can only be expressed by the figures of crucifixion, Gal. v. 24, sacrifice, Rom, xii. 1, and others of similar import.*

* How strikingly this appears in the case of Abraham! Human nature in the patriarch, when God commanded the sacrifice of his son, is in him absolutely made the slave of the divine nature. Neither human reasonings nor human feelings are for a single moment listened to. Gen. xxii. 1—10. Rom. iv. 20—22. Heb. xi. 17. James ii. 21. Not that the body in a child of God is subjected to monkish or superstitious austerities. From such the body no less than the mind is set free. Use of the world, not abuse of it: the use of every creature as good, and as not when applied to its proper purpose to be refused, is the Christian's practice.

CHAPTER IV.

MANNER IN WHICH TO THE MEMBERS OF THE HEAVENLY CHURCH IS IMPARTED THE EARNEST OF THE DIVINE NATURE, SPIRITUAL, NOT MIRACULOUS. ENTIRE CESSATION OF MIRACLES. ONE GRAND EFFECT OF THIS, THE COMPLETE DEVELOPMENT IN ALL RESPECTS OF MAN'S ENMITY TO GOD.

SECTION FIRST.

GOD THE FATHER EVEN IN TIME OF THE MEMBERS OF THE HEAVENLY CHURCH, AND HIS WORD THE SEED BY WHICH THEY ARE BEGOTTEN. THEIR REGENERATION THOROUGHLY SPIRITUAL, AND YET NOT IN ANY RESPECT WHATSOEVER MIRACULOUS.

AGAINST a mistake with regard to my views, into which my readers are extremely liable to fall, I find it necessary for me to put them on their guard.

Notwithstanding the fact that all those who are saved during the period of the third and last experiment upon man,—the period now running on,—have the mind of God opened up to them, and thereby the earnest of the nature of God conferred upon them, by God himself, there is actually nothing miraculous in the whole matter. Salvation is carried into effect in time in their case, by means of causes which

may be said with the strictest propriety of language to operate quite naturally.

The means of this grand and glorious result exist in the scriptures themselves; a book the various parts of which were at first supernaturally inspired and recorded, but which for eighteen hundred years has been preserved by a series of natural and ordinary expedients, and which is translated into different languages by dint merely of the natural learning, talents, and industry of man.

These scriptures constitute now the seed of the divine nature in the hearts and consciences of those into whom the knowledge of their meaning is introduced. Every nature, whether vegetable or animal, is propagated by seed; the nature propagated in every case necessarily corresponding to its principle: and so is the divine nature. Scripture is divine seed, and when as his seed it is sown in the conscience by God himself, and fostered there by his providential superintendence, it takes effect and grows. The divine knowledge and love which are of this procedure on the part of God the necessary results, constitute the embryo or earnest of the divine nature. They imply the existence in the mind of the individual of a principle which shall, at the appointed period, be brought forth from the womb of time and ushered mature into the life and atmosphere of eternity. But the whole of this is not, as to its principle and mode of operation, more miraculous than are the implantation and growth of any other seed. The same God who must give effect to seed of any other kind, and under whose fostering care alone plants and animals are produced—the same God, without whose interposition as to soil, climate, and sunshine, the blade of grass cannot sprout, or the acorn be matured into the oak, and by whose power alone animals conceive and bring forth their young—this same God is the cause, in the course of his providence, of the efficacy of the scriptures

in the heart of any man originally, and at every future stage of increased illumination. To impart to any one by means of the scriptures the earnest of the divine nature is, then, a process which is divine unquestionably,—divine as regards the thing imparted as well as the being who imparts,—but it is a process which is begun and conducted upon principles which apply equally to the germination and growth of the whole vegetable and animal creation.

So decidedly is this the case, that as it is through the death of the seed implanted in the ground the wished-for grain springs up, John xii. 24, 1 Cor. xv. 36—38, so is it through the death of the scriptures in their literal or fleshly sense in the conscience, combined of course with the death of the natural conscience itself, Rom. vi. 3—11, vii. 9—13, Eph. ii. 16, that the germ of a new and divine life is produced. Gal. ii. 20. *The letter* or fleshly sense *killeth*; it is *the Spirit* or true and heavenly sense alone which *giveth life*. 2 Cor. iii. 6; also John vi. 63. And therefore when Christ's words, which the Scriptures are, 1 Peter i. 10, 11, Rev. xix. 10, become *spirit and life* to any one, it is by means of that which naturally killeth being itself killed, in the very act of its being rendered divine seed, through the quickening efficacy of the truth of God in the conscience.

Mistaken views respecting this all-important subject may, notwithstanding what I have said, still be entertained: to obviate these, some further statements and illustrations may be found of service.

The process of the implantation of the scriptures, that is, of the knowledge of their meaning, and of love to him whom they reveal, in the conscience of a child of God, and the production of the earnest of the divine nature thereby, corresponds to the process of the implantation of any other seed, and to the communication of quickening efficacy to it. This being the case, it is not so much the process of implantation,

as the nature of the seed implanted, which, in the present instance, demands our attention. That seed, be it remembered, differs from all others in this, that it belongs not to any inferior nature, but to the highest conceivable and possible of all natures, even the nature of God himself. As God infinitely transcends man, so does the nature which this seed imparts infinitely transcend man's nature. Every plant, every animal, however, must impart its own nature to its offspring. Nothing besides can do it. The oak alone can produce the acorn—the dog alone can produce the dog—man alone can produce man. Just so in the case before us. The depositor of divine seed, and the communicator of the divine nature, whatever subordinate agency may be employed, is always of necessity God himself; that is, the being whose nature is communicated. To suppose anything else, would be absurd. It would be to suppose, that, while inferior beings alone can impart their respective natures, the highest of all natures could be imparted by an agency inferior to that of the highest of all beings himself! This of course cannot be. Strictly analogous to the communication of other natures, is thus the communication of the divine nature. The persons who become partakers of it, during their abode in flesh, *are born, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.* 1 Peter i. 23. And God himself, whose seed the scriptures, as imparting the divine nature, are, is he alone by whom, as their Father, they are begotten. Rom. viii. 15; Gal. iv. 6; 1 John iii. 1, 2, 9, 10; v. 1, 2.

Perhaps the following abridged statement of what precedes may be plain and perspicuous. The communication of the divine nature is not miraculous, but takes place by a process analogous to that by which any other nature is communicated. Other natures are imparted by the parent through seed; none but the parent imparting it; and his own nature being what

he imparts. Just so here. God is the Father; his own nature is what he is imparting, a nature which, as parent, he alone can impart; the scriptures constitute the seed through which he does impart it; and where he wills these scriptures, as his word and seed, to take effect in the mind of any one, there of necessity is the germ of the divine nature deposited. Thus is the whole process the reverse of miraculous. God communicates his nature in a manner perfectly analogous to that in which other beings communicate their respective natures.

About all this, I say, there is nothing miraculous. Miracles were extraordinary actions, performed by the immediate exertion of divine power; or extraordinary displays of divine interposition, calculated to arrest the eye or ear, and to be apprehended by natural or fleshly mind. They were all of the nature of appeals to man's mind and principles as a human being. This, however, is not the case here. In the imparting of the knowledge—the true and divine sense—of the scriptures, and thereby of the earnest of the divine nature, there is nothing which the eye of flesh can perceive, and the mind of flesh can apprehend. There is nothing external, nothing carnal, nothing earthly. All is internal, spiritual, and heavenly. The meaning of the scriptures is so—the nature which that meaning implies and imparts is so—the glorious being who opens up the meaning and thereby imparts the nature is so. Nay, so far from the process of the communication and growth of the divine nature in the saved ones coming within the verge and scope of human observation and apprehension—so far from its being intended to strike the fleshly eye and mind, as all miracles were—on the contrary, the very notion of such a spiritual process existing, and of the divine nature being thereby communicated, stands opposed to all that the eye of man can see, or the mere mind

of man can conceive; and so completely shocks and revolts the mere mind of man, that its existence is by that mind always and unhesitatingly denied. Thus it ever has been—thus it ever must be. Could man observe and apprehend the process of the communication of the divine nature, a process that is heavenly, just as he was capable of observing and apprehending a miracle of old, a process which was earthly, then would one of two things follow, both equally impossible, and both equally opposed to scripture: either earthly mind could be made to understand a heavenly subject, in opposition to 1 Cor. ii. 14, and at the expense of maintaining the absurdity that what is shadowy may take hold of what is substantial; or the opposition subsisting between things heavenly and things earthly would be represented as having an existence merely in words, not in fact, and all that the word of God says of Jesus as superior and opposed to Adam—of spirit as superior and opposed to soul—of heaven as superior and opposed to earth—would be mere moonshine! Under such circumstances the existence of miracles, or of those appeals to the external senses and fleshly mind of man which miracles imply, is, in connexion with the present system of things, as a communication of the earnest of the divine and heavenly nature, through the incorruptible seed of the word, an utter impossibility. The process of imparting the mind of God now is natural, or not miraculous, in as far as when God makes use of the scriptures as its seed or earnest, he acts agreeably to principles which the human mind recognises as operating necessarily in the production of plants and animals. It is also natural, or not miraculous, in as far as in beginning and in carrying it on God makes no appeal to anything calculated to strike the eye or ear, makes no appeal to fleshly mind, in proof of its existence. It is the fact of its being thus natural or non-miraculous, however,—that is, of its being propagated in such a manner as not to attract the eye of

flesh, but agreeably to its own internal, spiritual, and heavenly nature,—which must ever prevent the earnest of the mind of God in the members of his church from being observed and understood by any, except by the very few individuals themselves in whom, by divine power through the medium of the scriptures, it exists and is being carried on.*

The seed of the divine nature thus introduced into the conscience by the scriptures, so far from being as many suppose and allege the mere enlargement, improvement, and adaptation of old and earthly principles already existing, is in reality, as being the introduction of a principle which is heavenly, the earnest of a new creation. To be enabled to see this, let it be considered that the heavenly nature of Jesus is ultimately, in all its fulness, superinduced upon the earthly nature of Adam: the incorruptible being fully put upon the corruptible, and the immortal upon the mortal. 1 Cor. xv. 53, 54. Then shall *mortality be swallowed up of life*. 2 Cor. v. 4. That is, then shall salvation be complete: not in consequence of the creature nature being in any respect whatever perpetuated; but in consequence of the creature nature being completely done away with, through its being swallowed up for ever in the nature of the Creator, the Lord Jesus. The shadow shall then be completely and for ever superseded by its glorious substance; or, to avail myself of the language of scripture, *the image of the earthy* shall then be completely and for ever superseded by *the image of the heavenly*. 1 Cor. xv. 49. Just so, when there takes place

* Owing to the constitution of man as a being of flesh and blood, God in communicating to the members of his church the knowledge and love of himself through the Scriptures, imparts to them and gives them to enjoy the earnest of the Divine nature in the only way in which, during their abode on earth, they are capable of doing so. The process therefore, although in itself spiritual, heavenly, and divine, is so far natural as that it is beautifully and perfectly adapted to the present state and circumstances of a being who is *of the earth, earthy*.

upon earth, through the imparting of the knowledge of the scriptures, the imparting of the earnest of the divine nature. The blessing of salvation, from the moment of his first spiritual acquaintance with the scriptures, begins to be enjoyed by the individual. An earnest of what ultimately takes place is by him even here below experienced. Earthly principles are in him in process of being swallowed up in principles which are heavenly and divine. Gal. ii. 20, Eph. iv. 24: salvation consisting not in the perpetuation of any thing that is creaturely, but in the elevation of the creature in the scale of being, through the absorption of his Adamic nature in the glorified nature of Christ Jesus. *Old things* in him are not being perpetuated by being improved, but are *passing away*, in consequence of *all things being made new*. Rev. xxi. 4, 5, 2 Cor. v. 17. Therefore it is that the whole process, in one born from above, is from first to last destruction or supersession of creature principles, by the superinduction on them of principles which are heavenly and divine; terminating in a spiritual or substantial body superseding the earthly or shadowy one, just as the spiritual mind supersedes the fleshly mind. Phil. iii. 21, Rom. viii. 10, 11, compared with what precedes. 1 Cor. xv. 49, 53, 54.

Here let me observe that it is not to the scriptures apart from God their Author, and from their meaning as introduced by him into the conscience, that we are to ascribe any divine or saving efficacy. Certainly not. The thousands, the millions, who read them without understanding their signification,—who put upon them a sense of their own, without having the real sense of them imparted to their minds,—afford proof positive of this. Scripture as the word of God has power; but power only when wielded as his weapon by God himself.* Rather it is scripture addressed by God

* See Rev. xix. 15, also Heb. iv. 12.

himself to man,* and not scripture as read, studied, and enforced by man, which is the word of God. This however, as has been already stated, is in the teeth of the idea of God now acting miraculously : in the communication of the knowledge of himself God now delivers no visions, he utters now no voices, he sends forth now no prophecies. He now merely speaks to the mind through what is already written, and according to what is already written. Non-miraculous is his whole procedure in this matter. Unquestionably the nature, the earnest of which God through the scriptures imparts, as being his own nature, stands opposed to the nature of man. But in the act of imparting it no violence is experienced by the mind. If opposed to fleshly nature—if opposed to former views, maxims, and sentiments—in being made recipients of it we become aware of its being indeed the nature of God himself, and agreeable to the true meaning of that blessed book, by means of the opening up of which the all-important revolution in question has been effected. Ps. cx. 4.

Still farther: the members of the church, saved in time by the manifestation of the truth to their consciences, are brought into contact with that written word through which the blessed change takes place, by ordinary means and expedients. By birth, by education, by change of residence, by intercourse with their fellow men, or by other ways of a similar description. Nothing miraculous exists or is visible in the whole of this. God is undoubtedly the wise and sovereign arranger of the entire series of events, through

* Mat. xiii. 9, Rev. xiii. 9. *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.* These are God's words, addressed to every one upon whom he confers the knowledge of himself and to none besides. Like the words, *Let there be light*, Gen. i. 2, they always and necessarily, in the case of every one to whom they are directed, take effect. See also Acts xvi. 30, 31, where God himself, by the mouths of Paul and Silas, having spoken, faith, as the effect, of necessity followed.

which as means the end aimed at, namely the illumination of the church, is attained to. But throughout, nothing more than a train of ordinary occurrences, in which men influenced by ordinary human motives are actors, can be detected.

Miraculous divine interposition is, however, not more out of place in the illumination of the heart and conscience of a child of God, through the medium of the written word, than it is in any and every other circumstance which has occurred, is occurring, or will occur, during the whole of this third and closing æra of probation. Therefore it is that, while it lasts, miracles are absolutely unknown. Not with miracles, but with their entire cessation, was the present state of things, and was the present divine experiment on man which is therewith connected, ushered in. The apostles died—Jerusalem was destroyed—the temple and its worship ended—and miracles were no more. With the reconciling of the church to God, through the medium of the apostolic preaching and testimony, miracles as essential to that state of things were associated; 2 Cor. v. 18—20, Rom. v. 10, xiii. 11, 1 Cor. xii. xiii. xiv.; seeing that a dispensation which had been established by miracles could only suitably and appropriately by miracles be abrogated; John xv. 22—24, Acts, throughout: but when the state of reconciliation came to be superseded by the state of salvation, Rom. v. 10, xiii. 11, Phil. ii. 12,—when the earthly church in its last and highest form came to be superseded by the heavenly church, Rev. xii. 7—11, xiv. 1—5, xxi. 1—5, which event occurred at the period of Moses' dispensation being overturned and destroyed,—then miracles, as a species of appeal to earthly mind and as connected with the earthly state of the church, gave place to something higher, even the super-induction of the earnest of heavenly mind upon the members of the heavenly church of the living God. Rom. viii. 9, 10, 2 Cor. v. 17.—Having thus been established on the cessation

of miracles, on the same principle of non-miraculous interposition has the present system of things since been carried on. There has, since the destruction of Jerusalem, been no special outward appearance on the part of Deity — no manifestation miraculously of divine wisdom, power, or love, of which fleshly mind could take cognizance. To miracles, during the currency of the present æra, innumerable pretensions have, no doubt, been made. The church of Rome vaunts its ability even now, when necessary, to perform them; and other religious bodies from time to time would fain persuade their besotted adherents that they also are possessed of powers of a similar nature, although for special reasons they may be permitted to lie in abeyance. Perhaps, as in the recent case of the Irvingites, they may have the hardihood, or the folly, or both, to put forth a claim to their actual exercise. All, however, in vain. Not a single miracle,—not a single instance of miraculous divine interposition,—can since the days of the apostles be authenticated. And this because none has taken place.* Miracles from the period alluded to ceased to exist, because, consistently with the prosecution of God's ulterior plans, their continuance was impossible. God's intention was to follow up a state of things which was entirely miraculous, as was that of paradise—and one which was partly so, as was that which ended with the destruction of Jerusalem—by a closing one, in which there should be no miracles at all. In this it is our privilege to live. Mankind were, during the whole period of its continuance,—instead of having their attention roused from time to time by *wonders in the heavens above, or signs on the earth beneath*, Joel ii. 30, Acts ii. 19,—to behold the course of events proceeding in an

* See Conyers Middleton's learned Dissertation on the subject of Miracles. Not that I am to be understood as subscribing to all that eminent individual's statements, or as acquiescing in what is suspected to be, perhaps with truth, his grand conclusion. It is *his facts* which are worth attending to. See also Jortin's Ecclesiastical History.

orderly and regular train. No breaks, no interruptions, by the immediate exhibition of divine agency, as took place at Sinai and elsewhere, were to be permitted. So matters have been — so will they continue to be. The kingdom of God, now existing for a space of eighteen hundred years, was introduced without observation or outward show: none having been able with truth to say concerning it, *Lo here!* or *Lo there!* Luke xvii. 20, 21. And this latency from the fleshly gaze of the world shall, throughout the whole period of its existence, continue to be its grand characteristic. Fleshly eye hath not seen it — fleshly mind hath not recognised it. Nor will they ever be able to do so. No miracles, no outward signs serve to conduct them to its exact location, as miracles pointed to the earthly church of God of old. — And as with the commencement and continuance of this present state of things, so with its termination. No miracles will announce the approach of that event. The present æra came in *like a thief in the night*: stealthily, unexpectedly, unobservedly. So will it terminate. Natural causes unknown, and perhaps up to the very moment of their operation unsuspected, will effect the destruction of *the old heavens* and *the old earth*. The mass of mankind, like the inhabitants of the antediluvian world, and like the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, will be taken by surprise. Men will be proclaiming to themselves *peace and safety*, when in reality *sudden destruction* is impending over their heads. 1 Thess. v. 3. Civilization and refinement will have progressed; perhaps, in consequence of improved institutions, pauperism in its more disgusting forms will have disappeared, and fleshly religion will be in vogue: all will be engaging — all comfortable — all apparently established. But God's word must be fulfilled. Sentence against this world hath gone forth: it must be executed. Hence the train is laid — everything is prepared — and the mine is ready to be sprung.

Causes adequate to the result aimed at will suddenly take effect, and close the drama of this world's eventful history. Without a miracle — without anything that has even the appearance of a miracle — the *earth and all the works that are therein shall suddenly be burnt up.* 2 Peter iii. 10.

The fact is, the existence of miracles now would be completely at variance with the object aimed at by God in setting up this present and closing scene of things. God is now leaving man as it were entirely to himself, and to the display of his nature without apparent check or control. Instead of visibly interfering with man's movements, and visibly punishing man's transgression, as in previous ages, — thereby from time to time impressing upon the minds of the most profligate and callous, suspicions of His existence, power, and righteous vengeance, — His purpose is now to permit man, unrestrained by any considerations except by those of what have been somewhat infidelishly denominated "the laws of nature," to act as he pleases, and to bring to light all the evil that naturally has a place in the human heart. And well is man, unconscious of his mere instrumentality in the hands of his Maker, responding to the divine purpose. Sometimes, if of a bolder temperament, he is found unhesitatingly ascribing all to chance, to his own exertions, or to the course of nature: — enquiring, with a sceptical sneer, "*Where is the promise of God's coming?*" 2 Peter iii. 4. And when, from timidity or other natural causes, a speculative system of infidelity is not avowed and acted on, men shew forth the existence of a principle of intense and deadly hatred to God, by the whole tone of their minds and by the whole spirit of their conduct. They deify intellect, morals, fleshly religion, themselves — anything, everything — rather than the living and true God. Pleasure is evidently the idol of some — mammon is intensely worshipped by others — while plans of ambition, sometimes constructed on the most gigantic scale, are the

shrine at which many pay their devotions. Religion is not unfrequently the cloak which is thrown by men over their infidelity; but when drawn aside, it is found always and necessarily to be some system of religion of man's devising, impudently set up to the exclusion and supersession of that which is revealed by God himself. Thus whether openly or covertly infidel, man has, during the long period of the present æra which has already elapsed, been bringing out to view the fact that *the living and true God is not in all his thoughts*. In all this the spirit of opposition to God innate in man, Rom. viii. 7, has been left to its full and unqualified operation. No miraculous interposition of Deity has occurred to check him in his impious career. Even *pure and undefiled religion*, as professed by the few who are members of the true church, and as seen in the peculiar effects of which it is productive, serves but to supply fleshly mind with new occasions of shewing what it is—serves but to strengthen and develop the enmity of fleshly mind to God. This extent of the development of fleshly mind could not take place, were God from time to time miraculously to interfere. Human nature would in that case be checked in its displays. It would not have full and fair play. Fear operating would more or less restrain it; and God's purpose of affording it full scope for its manifestation would in that way be frustrated—frustrated by himself. This, however, cannot be. Hence, without once miraculously interfering, God has from the period of Jerusalem's destruction been allowing the stream of man's infidel nature to run on, increasing in strength, and depth, and breadth, till the present time: the same principle of non-miraculous interposition, with its necessary accompaniment of increasing displays of man's heartfelt and thorough infidelity, regulating God's future procedure towards the human race.

Blessed, truly blessed, has been the result of the cessation

of miracles to the minds of the saved ones, the members of the heavenly church of the living God. If not to God's people so injurious as to mere men of the world, miracles never were, and if they had subsisted now never could have been, even to them, a very desirable instrument for the promotion of true and heavenly piety. Upon heathens and fleshly-minded Jews such special divine interpositions, instead of improving and enlarging their minds, tended but to produce the impression of God being a local Deity, and of his interfering in the affairs of men only by fits and starts. He was to heathens, when specially avenging himself upon them, *the God of the hills, but not the God of the valleys*: 1 Kings xx. 23. 28: a God who took notice of some events, while he was absolutely indifferent about, if he did not even slumber over, a large proportion of others. 1 Kings xviii. 26—28; also 1 Samuel v. 3—12, vi. 19, 20. Roused only when he appeared after an extraordinary fashion, the rest of the lives even of the majority of his chosen people was spent in an exhibition of practical infidelity. See Psalm lxxviii. throughout. Was it possible even for men taught from above, living in a period when divine knowledge was comparatively slender, Matt. xi. 11, xiii. 16, 17, 2 Tim. i. 10, 1 Peter i. 10—12, to escape altogether the contagion of such views and feelings? Could they fail to be affected more by miraculous appearances of Deity than by a steady, profound, divinely imparted, and well regulated conviction of his omnipresence, omniscience, and constant energetic operation? Matt. xiv. 25—33, Luke v. 5—9. Blessed be God, I say, all temptation to the indulgence of semi-infidel notions and feelings has now, with miracles, in the case of the church passed away. That temptation to regard God as present only in some places and on some occasions, to which miracles necessarily gave rise, has been superseded by higher and holier views of things. There are now no miracles, and

consequently the church has no inducement to localise or otherwise restrict the operations of Deity. God's presence everywhere, — alas! for human language, do what I will in denying locality to God, I am constrained from its poverty to employ expressions in which locality is implied, — God's knowledge of all things, persons, and events, and God's incessant and uniform working, constitute now, in the minds of persons spiritually enlightened, deep and habitual principles of devotion and practice.* We see him in every mineral substance; we see him in every blade of grass that grows; we see him in every event, however apparently trifling it may be, that happens. He is over all and in all; and all are in him. *The very hairs of our head*, we now bear in mind continually, *are all numbered*; and it is matter to us of constant satisfaction that *a sparrow cannot fall on the ground without our Father*. Matt. x. 29, 30. Notions of what is commonly denominated a special providence have, it is true, in consequence of the accurate, enlarged, and scriptural views imparted to us, from our minds passed away. That is, of God acting and interposing more at one time than he does at another. And the reason is, that such notions savour of the period of miracles; and of the inferior, indeed, the false views of God which then necessarily prevailed. God's providence, instead of being confined to a few persons or events, is now to us visible over everything, and in everything. He is to us *all in all*. This view of God we owe to the spiritual and heavenly nature of the state of salvation now existing, and to the spiritual and heavenly principles which in all respects this state has been the means of introducing. Conditional views of God have in us been superseded by unconditional, limited by unlimited ones. In-

* Such Psalms as the 119th, 139th, &c., form no objection to what I am asserting. Although by the folly of commentators often applied to saints who lived in Old Testament times, they are in reality records of the personal experience of the Lord Jesus Christ in flesh.

stead of requiring to seek for God with the eye of sense, and and with the mind of flesh, as was the case while miracles continued, God hath now anticipated and superseded the necessity for all such searchings on our part, by making himself known to us in our inmost minds as the author of all our views and the source of all our experience and enjoyments. *In him* we now know that *we live, move, and have our being*. Acts xvii. 28. To him and to his glorious plans we now know that we, with all we are and all we have, are necessarily and completely subservient. And as it is with us so do we know it to be with all others. For God is *the God of the spirits of all flesh*: Numbers xvi. 22, xxvii. 16: the creator of all, the providential preserver of all, the absolute and irresponsible controller of all. This view of God, as it is more enlarged and correct, so is it also more influential than any which miracles could implant and foster. Heavenly itself, it is the sole origin of all true and heavenly practical piety. Operating not by fits and starts, but always and uniformly, it is productive of a habit of ascribing all to God, and of receiving all from God. Under such circumstances, am I not justified in representing an unmiraculous as superior to a miraculous state of things? And consequently as adapted to that state, superior in other respects,—the state now existing,—which salvation as distinguished from reconciliation has introduced?

SECTION SECOND.

THE EFFECT OF THE PASSING AWAY OF MIRACULOUS DIVINE INTERPOSITION, THE THOROUGH EXHIBITION OF HUMAN ENMITY. NEGATIVELY. POSITIVELY.

An unmiraculous state of things like that which now subsists is thus, it appears, adapted to, characteristic of, and

required by the situation and circumstances of the members of God's church, viewed as saved ones, and as thereby brought into the enjoyment of the highest privileges which they can possess while on earth, and invested with bodies of flesh and blood. But farther, it is the only state of things which is adapted to the present circumstances of unregenerate men, by being calculated to draw forth the enmity of fleshly mind to God to the most intense degree, and in the highest form which that enmity is capable of assuming. Bringing to light the fact, that to whatever extent enmity to God was manifested by Adam, and still more by the natural descendants of Abraham, there is than "all these depths a lower still"—a degree of enmity to God latent in human nature, which, until manifested, it was impossible to have conceived of, much less to have anticipated. This in an almost immediately preceding paragraph we have hinted at. The subject, however, is of too much importance to be disposed of in a mere cursory way.

The existing state of things, then, as connected with and involving the total withdrawal on the part of God of miraculous interposition, is subservient to the greatest exhibition of man's enmity to God in the two following respects:—

First negatively, as implying the removal altogether of that check upon man's enormities, and that impulse to the outward and temporary display of a regard to the divine will to which the occasional exhibition of miraculous phenomena certainly gave origin. Exodus xix. 16, &c., Numbers xiv. 39, xvi. 34, xxi. 7, &c. Such phenomena, it is true, served but to excite the principle of fear, the only way in which the fleshly and sinful conscience of man can be powerfully impressed and influenced; 1 Samuel vi. 19, 20; not the principle of love, which is of a heavenly nature and growth: 1 John iv. 7, 8, 1 Cor. xiii. throughout—understanding the Greek *αγαπη* to signify love. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. Operating

however, although they did only after a low and fleshly fashion, in restraining from evil, miracles, like law, were not without their use and advantage. 1 Tim. i. 8—10, see also 1 Cor. xiv. 21, 22, &c.

In the second place, positively, the unmiraculous state of things now existing furnishes direct stimuli the most powerful to the display of human enmity and wickedness in the highest possible degree. God now, to all human appearance, has ceased entirely to interfere with the affairs of men, and by the members of his church his interference is seen to come out merely in the course and shape of his ordinary and providential dealings. That natural ignorance of God, and that deep rooted and essential enmity to his revealed character, which are characteristic of man, have thus full scope to operate. But more. In such a state of things, they are roused and stimulated to exert themselves to the very uttermost. *Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.* Eccles. viii. 11. This is especially observable in religious matters. No preference being given by God apparently to one religious system above another, each individual may claim, and actually does claim, for that system to which he is more particularly attached, divine countenance and support; and this, however much it may stand opposed to God, without running the slightest risk of having it exposed and himself confounded by being miraculously interfered with. Indeed, so far from running any such risk, if numbers and outward success are to be assumed as tests of divine approbation, God appears rather to favour religious systems which the more enlightened part of mankind have agreed to reprobate and repudiate as unscriptural and antichristian. Witness for instance the widespread influence of Mahometanism and Popery. This circumstance, combined with the fact that the scriptures, by

the pure and profound views which they present of morals, are calculated to enlighten fleshly mind wonderfully upon its own principles; and with the additional fact, that fleshly mind being essentially enmity to God, the more it is enlightened on its own principles, the more powerful does its enmity become, or rather, the greater scope and ability has that enmity for displaying itself; may serve to shew how it is, that during this present and unmiraculous state of things, and even by means of it, the natural enmity of man to God is necessarily stimulated to exert itself with its greatest virulence and intensity. Let man do what he will—let him insult God after whatever fashion he may think proper—let him set up any theory of religion which his mind may devise, in opposition to the doctrine of the grace of God—let him represent this theory, the mere creature of his own imagination, as divine, thereby converting it into an object of idolatry—and let him by means of it gratify his own avarice, or ambition, or both, at the expense of his dupes; I say, let him do all this: he yet runs no risk of being miraculously exposed, or of being dealt with as the men of Bethshemesh, 1 Sam. vi. 19, 20, Uzzah, 2 Sam. vi. 7, and Uzziah, 2 Chron. xxvi. 19—21, the objects of immediate divine vengeance, were. All that any such man has to do, is to consult the dictates of prudence in managing his dupes, and to avoid violating any of the natural laws. Acting thus, he may, although *treasuring up for himself wrath against the day of wrath, and manifestation of the righteous judgment of God*, Rom. ii. 5, count upon, apparently, the most perfect impunity in this present state of things. And upon this principle men do act. Fearless of the result, they systematically and practically set God at defiance. It is true, He that sitteth in the heavens laugheth them and their doings to scorn; Psalm ii. 4; nevertheless, they are allowed, and reasonably enough reckon on their being allowed,

without any miraculous interference, to go on in the error and enmity of their ways. To fleshly minds it may appear that the Most High seeth not ; nay, by means of the worldly success which sometimes attends their efforts—by the great worldly dignities to which sometimes they attain—they may even be self-deceived enough to fancy that he looks down on them and their doings with decided approbation.

So much, in general, for the result of the present unmiraculous state of things, as having, negatively, by the removal of a check, and, positively, by the supply of direct stimuli, given occasion to this display of man's native infidelity and enmity to God in the highest possible degree.

SECTION THIRD.

A VIEW OF THE EFFECT OF THE PASSING AWAY OF MIRACULOUS INTERPOSITION, IN THE COMPLETE DEVELOPMENT OF MAN'S ENMITY TO GOD, AS EXTENDING TO EVERY OPERATION AND PRINCIPLE OF HUMAN NATURE ; AS PRACTICAL AS WELL AS SPECULATIVE.

Satisfactory, however, as the preceding statements may be to some, I question much their being understood by, much less their producing any deep and abiding impression on the minds of the great majority. Something more tangible and specific seems to be required. Exhibitions of man's enmity to God connected with the third and last experiment to which he is now subjected, and brought out in consequence of the fact of all miraculous interference on the part of Deity being now done away with, set forth particularly and in detail, can alone, it appears to me, meet the exigencies of the case. And, undoubtedly, without these, my view of the growth of the principle of enmity in man, or rather of the growth

of the exhibitions of that enmity, during the present æra, would be defective. For without these it might appear, from what I have been insisting on, that displays of man's enmity to God were confined by me to the subject of religion merely, instead of, as is actually the case, that enmity entering into and pervading the whole of man's principles, feelings, and conduct. Concerning displays of man's enmity of this latter description, it is, therefore, necessary that I should indulge in some detail. But how am I to manage this most extensive subject? If I go into it fully, I extend this part of my work to a disproportionate length, besides to many becoming tedious. If too brief, I fail in producing the desired impression.—Something minute and particular must therefore be said. But what I say shall be as much as possible in the shape of outlines, which it is left to the reader to fill up and embellish. Man's enmity to God being co-extensive with, and constituting the very essence of human nature itself, Rom. viii. 7, Matt. xvi. 23, and facts illustrative of it abounding in the inspired volume, a spiritually enlightened mind can never be much at a loss to complete the picture.

Let it always be borne in mind as we proceed that, under the present æra, no new principles of human enmity are being disclosed. The principles of human nature are as old as human nature itself. *The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life*, 1 John ii. 16, are coeval with man's existence, and have been in operation ever since man's original transgression. During this present state of things, then, there is nothing new apparent either in man's principles of action, or in the general results to which these give rise.* What is new is merely, 1st, the degree of intensity in which these principles are now displaying themselves; and, 2nd, the

* Any person may be satisfied of this by consulting the works of Theophrastus, or the Sermones of Horace. For affording views of human nature in ancient times, the Iliad and Odyssey of Homer cannot be surpassed.

peculiar phases or aspects which the outward exhibition of these are now occasionally assuming. The principles are the same — the general effects are the same — as in every preceding age. But the principle of human enmity is now unchecked by miraculous interposition, and is stimulated by enlarged, varied, and increasing opportunities, to more frequent and more decided exercise than formerly. That is all.

My intention is to treat of the exhibitions of man's enmity to God, during this present unmiraculous æra, first, as practical, and secondly, as speculative. And in order to limit the range of my observations, as well as because I consider travelling out of what is commonly denominated Christendom unnecessary, I confine myself to what is evident among ourselves, and the other civilised nations of Europe and America.

Passing over, then,

1st, the passive, or rather defensive efforts made by pagans, and especially the pagan priesthood, after the introduction of Christianity, to retain the ground which they had once occupied ; and,

2nd, the once aggressive, but now merely defensive efforts of the followers of Mahomet — both, unquestionably, exhibitions of man's enmity to God, during this third and present æra ;

And confining my attention exclusively to what has taken place, and is taking place, in countries professedly subject to the sway of Christianity ;

I consider the present exhibitions of man's enmity to God in the twofold order of which I have just spoken.

SECTION FOURTH.

PRACTICAL EXHIBITIONS OF HUMAN ENMITY.

I. Practical exhibitions of that enmity.

These are of three different kinds. The three great principles of man's knowledge are the senses, the intellect, and the conscience: constituting, respectively, the lowest, the intermediate, and the highest principles of his nature. Connected with each of these are displays of his opposition to God, which we touch on separately.

1. Practical displays of man's enmity to God belonging to the senses, or lowest part of his nature, in which increase is observable.

1st. A growing luxury of tastes and habits, to the fostering of which every discovery in art and science is rendered subservient.* In this, man makes *a god of his belly*, in direct opposition to Matt. vi. 25 — 34, 1 Cor. vi. 13, and Philip. iii. 19.†

2nd. The most intense desire of wealth, and the disposition to devise and adopt every expedient, right or wrong, which does not bring the individual actually under the lash of the law, ‡ in order to ensure the possession of it. § Mammon, in

* To what perfection in our own age has the art of cookery been carried, by the celebrated Ude, the modern Apicius, and others! With the works of the late Dr. Kitchener, who particularly distinguished himself in this branch of knowledge, perhaps some of my readers are acquainted.

† Indulgence in exquisitely dressed viands and rich wines, is not the only form in which the luxurious tastes of the present day display themselves. There are *quædam tacenda* perpetrated by men now, as well as by Bozzy Jocelin's monk, Wilhelmus Sacrista.—(Carlyle's "Past and Present.")

‡ Strong public opinion may occasionally repress and restrain; but it must be very strongly expressed, and must entail very disagreeable consequences upon the violator of it, in order to have that effect. See the instructive case of M. Zulueta, tried some time since in London.

§ Witness the slave trade, the traffic in opium, &c. &c.

this case, being the God ; and men, without the slightest hesitation, trampling under-foot declarations against this species of idolatry, which they themselves acknowledge to be divine. Such, for instance, as occur in Matt. vi. 19, 20, Eph. v. 3, Col. iii. 5, 1 Tim. vi. 7 — 10, 17 — 19, James ii. 1 — 9, iv. 13 — 15, v. 1 — 5.

3d. There is a very wonderful stimulation to the highest degree of the principle of ambition, by the state of society by the demand for talents and for their practical displays, and by the power and influence, with comparative safety as to the results, which await the successful. Rank and fame thus become objects of the most intense desire with many. But is this consistent with the spirit of Christianity ? Is not this thrusting of themselves forward on the part of human beings, and this placing or attempting to place themselves on a level higher than that which is occupied by others around them, a most decided manifestation of the enmity of the human mind to God ? Making a god of self, and violating all those exhortations to humility, to each one esteeming his brother better than himself, and so on, with which the scriptures abound, it is certainly, on the part of the creature, a setting himself in direct opposition to the God of Revelation. See Matt. xxiii. 5 — 12. Eph. iv. 2. Philip. ii. 3.

Besides, all the practices alluded to, in which men are exhibiting a growing disposition to indulge, are directly in the teeth of the procedure of the Son of God himself, while in flesh. He was often destitute of food, refusing to do what was wrong in order to procure it, Matt. iv. 1, 2, 11, xxi. 18, 19, although, when he pleased, it was in his power, from apparently the most trifling materials, to spread a feast for thousands ; John vi. 5 — 13 ; he coveted not worldly riches, Matt. viii. 20, although, when necessary, he had at his command money to supply both his own wants and the wants of others ; Matt. xvii. 24 — 27 ; and he disdained to tread

the paths of vulgar worldly ambition, Matt. iv. 8—11, Luke xii. 13, 14. John vi. 15, although *the Lord of life*, Acts iii. 15, and *glory*, 1 Cor. ii. 8, preferring sufferings to earthly honours during the whole of his career, 2 Cor. viii. 9, and at the close of it voluntarily *enduring the cross, despising the shame*. Heb. xii. 2. Dead to the world himself, even while living in it, Jesus hath thereby not obscurely intimated what is the nature, and what will be the necessary effect of his religion, in the minds of those who are actuated and influenced by it.* Under such circumstances, love to the world, indulgence in its licentious or decorous practices, and an ardent and unrestrained pursuit of its pleasures, wealth, and honours, can only admit of being construed as so many exhibitions of man's enmity to the mind of Christ, and thereby to God himself.

2. Practical displays of man's enmity to God, belonging to the intellect, or intermediate part of his nature, in which increase is observable.

These appear particularly in the giving of an almost unqualified approbation to the pursuits of elegant literature, to the discoveries of science, and to the engagements of philosophy, as conducive not merely to the cultivation of our minds, but also to the amelioration of our hearts, and the promotion of the best interests of society. These appear also in making an intellectual education, or what is called the enlightening of the minds of the young, the all in all of human advancement and human perfectibility. Indeed, in pretending to anticipate from the progress of mankind in arts, literature, and science, and from their being subjected to a process of training free from a sectarian bias and from religious partialities, the complete regeneration of the world. And all this notwithstanding that evident hardening of the

* See Romans vi. throughout. Also Col. iii. 1—5, &c.

heart of which literature, in many of its most distinguished cultivators, has been productive; notwithstanding the envies, jealousies, and heartburnings, as well as other vile tempers and unseemly passions, to which emulation among the educated is constantly giving birth; notwithstanding the pride with which success in any department of human knowledge is necessarily attended; and notwithstanding the proofs every day afforded, that mere increase of intellectual attainments by no means implies decrease of crime. Thus is the *wisdom of this world*, which is by the apostle stigmatised as *foolishness with God*, 1 Cor. i. 18—29, iii. 19, rendered the object of man's idolatry, and thereby set up in opposition to the living and true God.

How strikingly does all this stand contrasted with the practice of him by whom the acquisition of human literature, human knowledge, and human wisdom, was never deemed an object worth aiming at; and concerning whom, in the days of his flesh, it was enquired, and enquired with reference to facts as the basis of what was asked, *How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?* John vii. 15. And yet who was possessed of and could exhibit a wisdom, before which the highest and most cultivated human intelligences were made to quail; Matt. ix. 1—6, 11—13, xii. 1—9, 10—13, 24—37, xxi. 23—46; Luke x. 25—37; John xviii. 33—38, with Matt. xxvii. 19—25; and which could make human wisdom to shew itself to be what it really is, when brought into contact and contrast with that which is divine, foolishness itself. Matt. xxii. 15—22, 23—40, 41—46.

A preference of the pursuits of literature and science to the mere indulgence of sensual pleasures, covetousness, or the desire of external and vulgar honours, as one mode of exhibiting enmity to God, generally appears among minds of a somewhat superior order. And from the consideration of this form of human enmity, I am led naturally to,

3, those practical displays of man's enmity to God belonging to the conscience, or highest department of the human mind, increase in which is observable: displays chiefly proceeding from those who rank among the best and most reputable portion of mankind.

These all have a reference either to morals or religion, and may be classed under one or other of these two heads:—

1st. Morals.

Enmity to God in this respect is displayed in so many different ways, that only a very small selection as a specimen of the whole can be made.

First. With the language, *Swear not at all; but let your communication be yea, yea, nay, nay, for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil*, uttered by Christ himself, Matt. v. 34—37; and with the words, *Above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath; but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay, lest ye fall into condemnation*, James v. 12, uttered by an apostle under the guidance and direction of the Holy Ghost, sounding in their ears and acknowledged to be divine, not only are oaths permitted, but are actually under pains and penalties by law enforced, by men calling themselves christian, on their professed fellow disciples.

Secondly. The poor are represented in scripture as taken under the special patronage and protection of the Most High; Exodus xxii. 25, xxiii. 11, Lev. xxiii. 22, Deut. xv. 7—11, xxiv. 14, 15; kindness to them is even regarded by God as shewn to himself, and rewarded accordingly; Prov. xiv. 21, xix. 17, xxviii. 27, xxix. 14; and God comes forward emphatically in the character of the redresser of their wrongs and the punisher of their oppressors. Job v. 15, 16, xx. 19, 20, xxxvi. 15, Prov. xxi. 13, xxii. 16, xxviii. 8, Eccles. v. 8, Isaiah iii. 14, 15, &c. &c. See Isaiah lviii. 1—7. Men, professedly christian men, however, in a highly

advanced and advancing state of civilization, in opposition to God's views of the subject, and our Saviour's practice, Matt. viii. 20, and 2 Cor. viii. 9, regard poverty as something approaching to a crime, if not as actually criminal, and treat it accordingly. Allowances to the poor are cut down to the lowest degree possible; the usage to which they are exposed is of the harshest description; and even oppression of them, when calculated to save the pockets of the wealthy, not only meets with impunity, but occasionally even with approbation. In how many respects are they the subjects of imposts and laws, from which their more fortunate brethren are either altogether or in a great measure exempted! Under the Christian dispensation they actually enjoy fewer comforts and privileges than they did under the inferior and despised dispensation of Moses. Alas! what sickening, heart-rending, positively horrible disclosures, are, in connexion with "the short and simple annals of the poor," from time to time brought to light.

"Man's inhumanity to man
Makes countless thousands mourn."

BURNS.

So much for one particular instance of injustice which enters essentially into man's practical morality.

Thirdly. Prohibitions against acts of violence of every description, nay, prohibitions against even the indulgence of the angry thought, acknowledged on all hands to be of divine origin, abound in the scriptures. See Matt. v. 21, 22. 31—48, Rom. xii. 20, 21. In the teeth of these, men claiming to be the followers of the Lamb can not only encourage the spirit of litigation,—a comparatively venial fault,—but can inflict cruel secondary and even capital punishments; and above all, can, without the slightest compunction, engage in those bloody and destructive tragedies, commit those wholesale murders, which are the inevitable results of war. The

murder of one is by them punished by a judicial murder, while the murderer of thousands is crowned with laurels, and becomes the enduring object of a nation's plaudits and a nation's gratitude. May I request my readers to peruse attentively Luke ix. 51—56?

Many more specimens of man's opposition to God in respect of morals might, were it necessary, be adduced;* their name, indeed, is legion. There is not an institution of society, not a worldly usage, not a practice which has obtained the sanction of the many, in which enmity to God does not more or less make its appearance. Even boasted remedies for acknowledged human evils betray this "trail of the serpent."† Stumbling blocks are thrown down, and

* The licensing of gambling-houses, brothels, &c.

† For example, the temperance movement which has produced, and is producing, an immense deal of temporal good, with some small admixture of harm, is merely one specimen of man's enmity to God, being founded on principles diametrically opposed to those which pervade the volume of inspiration. Judges ix. 13, Matt. xi. 19, Luke xxii. 14—18, John ii. 1—10, 1 Cor. vii. 31, Phil. iv. 5, 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5, v. 25, &c. The existence of the vine, the permission to drink its fermented juice granted to the Jews of old, the practice of the Son of God in flesh, the injunction to Timothy, the fact of no prohibition against the use of wine appearing on the face of the New Testament scriptures, all these facts, independently of any species of reasoning, sufficiently declare the divine purpose. However, man always will be wiser than God. Acting on the same principles which induced Popery to ascribe to a state of celibacy greater purity than to that of marriage,—and thereby, in the case of their priests, monks, and nuns, to prefer total abstinence from marriage to the permission of a moderate use of the creature,—the temperance societies step without hesitation into the throne of God, ascribing to the total disuse of fermented and spirituous liquors a greater purity than to their use, and therefore prohibiting the moderate use of the fermented juice of the vine, which God has not prohibited; taking care, in the true spirit of that church whose example they copy, to fortify their prohibitions by vows of their own devising, and by calumniating those who prefer God's words to institutions of mere human invention. How applicable to them and to their practices Milton's words, with a slight alteration:—

"Defaming as impure what God declares
Pure, and commands to some, leaves free to all,
Our Maker bids partake: who bids abstain
But our destroyer, foe to God and man?"

Paradise Lost, Book Fourth.

Certainly temperance societies do good; and so do convents. What Luther

snare are laid for conscience, by means of insisting on subscription to articles of faith as the means of enjoying secular benefits, in opposition to Luke xvii. 1, 2, Rom. xiv. 13. Vows of celibacy are imposed, and by means of our laws of marriage judicial adulteries are given occasion to, in opposition to 1 Cor. vii. 2, 1 Tim. iv. 3. In a word, our whole system of morals is stark naught and "rotten to the core." It is regulated by a law the opposite of the law of love. And he who knows the truth, and is influenced by that love which the knowledge of the truth uniformly and necessarily inspires, can therefore never be at a loss for illustrations, in respect of morals, of man's enmity to God.

2ndly. Religion.

First. Opposition appears in the attempts made so universally to give to christianity a worldly establishment: whether by the Greeks or by the Latins; whether by Papists or by Protestants. We have what are called christian churches established by law in Spain, Italy, Germany, and Great Britain. Such a practice, although in professed imitation of Judaism, is utterly indefensible. For, 1st, the institutions of Moses, as having been thoroughly typical, were subservient to heavenly results, in the manifestation of Christ's heavenly character and the introduction of Christ's heavenly kingdom: whereas established churches are not types at all, being

says of one of the doctrines of Popery, we may say of both the institutions named—"The cover fits the dish." The human remedy suits the human minds which have devised it.—And, yet, except that I find it necessary to enter my solemn and decided protest against their assumption of a divine authority for what they are doing, temperance societies shall never be interfered with by me. Let them go on. They are certainly, in a variety of respects, promoting the temporal interests of their fellow men.—To their misrepresentations I am perhaps by my present remarks laying myself open. This is a matter of little consequence. Living moderately and temperately, under the influence of the highest principles, and thereby setting an example to others, but determined to keep myself aloof from every practice which appears to be a violation of God's word and a usurpation of God's authority, men are welcome to come to any conclusion concerning me which they please.

merely attempts to continue and perpetuate an earthly state of things which has passed away, besides being calculated to promote earthly interests, and to be subservient to the gratification of earthly passions. And, 2nd, earthly establishments of religion labour under this most essential of all defects — that while the Mosaic institutions were set up by God himself, they can lay claim to no higher than a mere human origin.* Man has erected them — man has endowed them — man sustains them. Christ's church, since Jerusalem was destroyed and the Old Testament dispensation overturned, has been heavenly and heavenly only. What are called churches of Christ as established by law, on the other hand, as they have an earthly origin, so also are they characterised by an earthly nature.

The whole of such attempts to give to Christianity a worldly establishment, and thereby to erect it in the form of a worldly monarchy, are besides in direct opposition to the language of him who said, *My kingdom is not of this world*; John xviii. 36; † to his refusal to reign here below, after an earthly fashion, even although he was head of the earthly dispensation of Moses; John vi. 15; and to his voluntarily parting with his earthly life, not that he might render his so doing subservient to the establishment of his religion in an earthly form, but that he might from the grave rise to the possession and enjoyment of the heavenly kingdom himself, and acquire the opportunity of bestowing it upon his disciples and followers. Heb. xii. 2. Matt. xxv. 34. John xvii. 24. 2 Tim. iv. 8.

Secondly. Opposition appears in the principles on which

* How must a shrewd and well-informed Jew laugh in his sleeve at those attempts, so common in our day, of humanly consecrated men, to win him from his attachment to the divinely consecrated priesthood of Aaron!

† See Glas' Sermon (admirable in many respects) entitled "The King of Martyrs." Bishop Hoadley's celebrated Discourse, preached in 1717, which gave occasion to the Bangorian Controversy, may also with advantage be consulted.

all external bodies calling themselves churches of Christ, whether established or dissenting, are constructed, and the various ways in which they are carried on. Apostolic churches belonged, as we have seen, only to the apostolic period; and when that at the period of Jerusalem's destruction ended, they ended likewise. But such churches are by all, except by the very few who in this respect are taught from above, supposed to be still in existence. And every different sect claims to be founded on the apostolic model, and guided by the apostolic maxims and practices. Alas! for matter of fact. Not only do all such bodies, in their presuming to claim a divine origin and authority for that which is merely human, betray opposition to God, but even if, for the sake of argument only, we should concede the actual existence of the church of Christ upon earth in an external form, (a thing which, in reality, we deny,) not one of the bodies in question could rightfully claim to be that church. They are all, more or less, constituted in opposition to that which they proclaim to be their model. Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, and Sandemanians, will all, when their respective tenets and practices are even superficially looked at, much more when they come to be minutely scrutinized, find it difficult, say rather impossible to escape from this charge. Polemical writers may attempt to screen them from it; and, for this purpose, may throw dust in the eyes of their readers: but in vain. The light of heaven, shining in God's word, exposes the hollowness of all such bodies, and the vanity of their pretensions. Diocesan bishops, lording it over their brethren, and "lifting their mitred heads in courts and parliament;" academically taught individuals, conceived to be, by means of their secular education, qualified either in whole or in a part to take *the oversight of the church of God*; humanly concocted forms of prayer imposed on all, and human articles and creeds, whether written or unwritten,

employed as a test of religious communion ; compositions, called sermons, having no higher origin than the learning, abilities, or present humour, of a mere fallible worm of the dust, enforced as if proceeding from God, upon one's fellow man ; ordinances, which were originally connected with a miraculous state of things, and originally dispensed by miraculously endowed men, now carried into effect in an æra not miraculous, and by men who can prefer no claim to miraculous gifts ; these and a multitude of other circumstances which characterise bodies calling themselves churches of Christ, being all in opposition to what we learn of the constitution and practices of the apostolic churches, as these are described in the New Testament, constrain the query, Can the bodies in question be aware of the discrepancies, rather, the contrasts subsisting between them, and their boasted apostolic models ? A single point of difference between the one and the other, if wilfully adopted and persisted in, would justly expose the external church to condemnation. But what shall we say when we find the discrepancies in question innumerable ; nay, entering so vitally and essentially into the constitution of earthly churches, that to remove them would be to destroy the very existence of such bodies ? If the earthly churches had been copied at all from the apostolic model, the copy should have been exact. And the fact of earthly churches now always and necessarily standing contrasted with the bodies described in the New Testament scriptures, might well lead even the supporters of the former to cherish doubts as to their divine origin.

Besides contradicting the constitution and practices of the apostolic churches, such bodies contradict likewise the practice of the blessed Redeemer, who, while on earth, conformed exactly and in all respects to Judaism as a divine institution, and as obligatory upon him to fulfil ; not allowing himself in any, even the minutest particular, to dispense

with its requirements; and who likewise has ascended to heaven,—not to give his saved ones an opportunity of constantly contradicting his heavenly state, character, and kingdom, by setting up an earthly system of their own, and therein exhibiting earthly desires and tempers,—but to implant in them, along with the knowledge of himself glorified, the earnest of his own glorified mind of love, whereby they may be constrained to the constant production of fruits like the principle from which they spring, heavenly and divine.

I pass over, from want of space, and for fear of becoming tedious, innumerable other instances of the opposition of earthly religion in its practical workings to the revealed character of God. Were it necessary, however, a very black catalogue of acts which either tacitly or formally have received its sanction might be made out. The persecuting spirit, and even conduct, of the professed followers of Jesus Christ; Luke ix. 51—56; their love of secular distinction; Matt. xxiii. 5—12; the laxity of discipline visible among religious bodies wherever the wealthy and the influential are concerned; James ii. 1—9; the attempts incessantly made to amalgamate as much as possible the church and the world; John xvii. 17, 1 Cor. vi. 15—20, x. 19—22, 2 Cor. vi. 14—18, Rev. xviii. 4; the lowering of the standard of practice to meet the characters and exigencies of those who choose to associate together as members of the so-called churches of Christ; Matt. v. 17 to the end, Rom. xiii. 8—10; the pharisaical demureness of aspect and disgusting cant which are often the chief recommendations of those who are supposed to be actuated by genuine piety; Matt. vi. 1—18, Luke xviii. 9—14; the latitudinarianism of language and conduct which, in strange contrast to the former, is but too frequently not only permitted but even lauded among professing christians; Ephes. iv. 17—32, Phil. iv. 8, 9; all these phenomena, and many others, might be pointed to as

illustrative of that essential enmity to God which pervades and characterises fleshly religion. The law of love it must be admitted is often on the lips of religious professors; but as thorns cannot bring forth grapes, nor thistles figs, so neither can their earthly minds produce other than earthly effects and consequences. John iii. 6. Pride, malice, envy, and uncharitableness will, under whatever guises they may assume, be found at bottom working in the bosoms, and, as far as they dare shew themselves, coming out even and betraying themselves in the actions of earthly churches, whether viewed as bodies or as consisting of individuals. Nor can it be otherwise. External christianity, or the shewing forth of christianity through the medium of an earthly church, is but an attempt on man's part to reduce the religion of Christ, which is in itself internal, spiritual, and heavenly, to a mere matter of form; and if a religion which has mere external form for its root shall be productive of actions which are merely formal and hypocritical as its fruits, what is there to be wondered at? Do not the effects exactly correspond with their cause? The tree is not good. It is merely a plant of nature's growth. And from the nature of man, what but effects of the nature of man should or can be anticipated? John iii. 6, Matt. xii. 33.

SECTION FIFTH.

SPECULATIVE EXHIBITIONS OF HUMAN ENMITY.

We proceed now to consider,

II. Speculative exhibitions of man's enmity to God.

This comes out,

1. In a direct denial, sometimes of all revealed religion, sometimes only of christianity.

2. In a virtual denial of christianity, under pretence of receiving and believing in it.

Each of these heads we take up and consider in the order named. In regard to the former, however, our observations shall be very brief. The enmity to God displayed in it being open and avowed, requires no amplification.

1. Enmity to God appears in an open denial of his revelation of himself, especially of Christianity.

We observe this discovering itself,

1st, in the form of works of various descriptions written avowedly with a view to the establishment of atheism or deism. Such are Mirabaud's *Système de la Nature*, the productions of Chubbs, Toland, &c. Or if certain authors do not find it convenient to go so far, they content themselves with insinuations against revealed religion and christianity, and with attempts to throw discredit on it. In proof of this we may vouch Tindal's "Christianity as old as the creation," Hume's "Treatise of Human Nature" and "Essays," J. Bentham's "Not Paul, but Jesus," &c., &c. The infidel mission of Robert Taylor and Richard Carlile, in 1829, was also an effort on the part of individuals to discredit and overturn christianity. See the collection of papers of these two individuals entitled "The Lion."

2ndly, in the combination of numbers of individuals for the open avowal and extensive propagation of principles atheistic or deistic, as took place on the part of many bodies which sprung up during the period of the French revolution.* Or in that abnegation of all religion on the professed ground of inability to understand more than the phenomena which nature and the circumstances of society present, which is characteristic of socialists and others of the same class in our own country and elsewhere.

* The Theophilanthropists, &c.

2. Enmity to God appears in a speculative form, in the actual rejection of christianity under pretence of receiving it.

This is a far more deadly and effective, because disguised, refined, and sometimes even rational form of infidelity or opposition to God, than the other. Christ here appears treacherously wounded *in the house of his pretended friends*. Enmity of this kind presents itself in a great variety of shapes. Some of these, for a few only we can enumerate, are the following:—

1st. Pretending to rest the truth of revelation and christianity, either in whole or in part, on what are called its external evidences. This, among the other circumstances of opposition to God by which it is characterised, involves the infidel principle of its being possible for that which is divine to be proved and illustrated by that which is human. See John v. 34. The fact is exactly the reverse. That which is divine as being light, 1 John i. 5—7, as indeed alone deserving the name of light, John i. 9, 14, xiv. 6, proves and illustrates, that is, throws light on that which is human.* Ephes. v. 13. External evidences, if the term must be employed, no doubt have their use; but this only negatively, or as a means of rebutting and repelling open and avowed opponents of christianity, and of refuting them even upon their own principles. No use whatever positively, that is, truly and spiritually, in opening up the mind of God, and enlightening the eyes of the understanding after a divine fashion, have such evidences, or can they have. Faith is God's gift, through his word rendered by himself spirit and life to the individual, not the result of man's reasonings and inferences. And yet, as if they could either produce or confirm a divine conviction,

* What connected and harmonious system of history, from the creation till the eighth or tenth century before Christ, for instance, could ever have been made out, except for the light thrown even upon natural facts by the records of the Old Testament scriptures?

are the external evidences of revelation constantly employed.*

2nd. The manner in which even the internal evidences of christianity are commonly stated and insisted on affords another melancholy view of enmity to God. Unquestionably the internal evidences of christianity, as presented by God himself in his word to the members of his church, satisfy their minds; but not what are called these evidences as collected, marshalled, and enforced by mere human beings in their writings and oral discourses. These, however frequently, and I fear sometimes intentionally confounded, are two very different things. Observe what it is I object to. It is men proceeding upon the false principle of the truth of revelation being visible or capable of being seen in any other light than in its own: that is, proceeding on the principle of the possibility of separating the internal evidences of revelation (its *only* evidences) from the revelation itself. It is men presupposing the possibility of our being able to look at and comprehend these evidences, apart from and independently of the revelation of which they are evidences. Now this is impossible. The revelation and its evidences are identical. To see revelation to be what it is, true and divine, is to see it to be so in the light of its own internal evidences: the seeing of the revelation, and the seeing of the internal evidences of its truth and divine origin, being one and the same thing. Thus in the light of revelation itself are its internal evidences seen, or capable of being seen. To pretend, then, to teach the truth of revelation to any one through the medium of its internal evidences, is, in the event of the individual already knowing it, to do that which is superfluous; and in the event of his not knowing it, is, besides the folly of attempting to

* For a further illustration of the point here glanced at, I beg to crave the reader's attention to the observations on the same subject which occur in the Preface to my edition of J. Barclay's *Without Faith, without God*, published in 1836.

separate what God hath joined together, to assume to ourselves a prerogative which is peculiar and restricted to God himself. Man cannot communicate — man cannot confirm divine truth. God alone can do so. When man attempts to do either, which he does in pretending to teach, as distinct from the revelation itself, the internal evidences of revelation, (these two being, as we have seen, inseparable,) it thus appears that he is after a twofold fashion, by violating God's established connexion between two things and by usurping God's prerogative, manifesting at once his ignorance of him and opposition to him.*

3d. Attempts to rationalise revelation and christianity are likewise manifestations of the enmity of the creature to the creator: and this, whatever form those attempts may assume. Whether the German form of directly subjecting the scriptures to the test of human reason — selecting from them the books and portions of books which it is alleged approve themselves to that faculty — dealing with their contents as we would with writings confessedly uninspired, — and explaining their miracles and prophecies upon principles and by means of facts and phenomena with which we become, in the ordinary course of providence, acquainted; or the older, and at one time common form of professing to receive the canonical scriptures as inspired, and to admit the truth of their miracles and prophecies, while care was taken to nullify all this by the laying down, as an indispensable preliminary, of certain doctrines which it was considered impossible the scriptures could maintain — such as the deity of Christ, the efficacy of his atoning sacrifice, the complete depravity of human nature,

* Look into Paley's *Evidences of Christianity*, or any other work on the subject, it matters not whose it may be; and if you have been taught from above you cannot fail to be struck in a moment at the awkward figure which what are called the internal evidences cut in such a book. The truth is, in human writings internal evidences are altogether out of place. The internal evidences reside in the revelation itself.

and the absolute inefficacy of all human virtue to the salvation of man, on the ground of such and similar doctrines being inherently and necessarily repugnant to reason. Such procedure is, by a mind taught from above, seen in a moment to be opposed to revelation — indeed to be subversive of revelation altogether. Subjecting revelation to reason, or rather identifying revelation with reason by dragging down revelation to the low level of reason, it follows that revelation, as distinct from reason, ceases to have any existence. Revelation, if such there be, must be the superior and controller of reason ; but the revelation of rationalists is reason's inferior, is indeed reason's slave ! How strange, how absolutely incredible, because insane, would be such conduct, were it not that examples of it are continually being obtruded on our notice ! The atheist who denies the being of God, and the deist who denies the existence of a written divine revelation, however open to objections on other grounds, are at all events so far consistent with themselves in rejecting the statements which the scriptures contain. But that any man, after professing to regard the scriptures as a revelation, and consequently as divine even in the lowest sense of which the word divine is susceptible, should afterwards pretend to sit in judgment on these scriptures — that the creature, instead of bowing reverently to the decisions of the Creator, should actually venture to drag the Creator to his bar — this, this is monstrous indeed ! And yet, among the whole body of rationalists, as the necessary offspring of their fundamental principles, it is matter of every day occurrence. Man takes upon him the somewhat arduous and blasphemous task of teaching God, instead of condescending to be taught by God ! Man, in the matter of miracles and prophecies, takes upon him to correct God's blunderings ! Man modestly tells God that the incarnation of his own well-beloved Son, — the manifestation of God in flesh, — is an impossibility, although the salvation of man is

involved in, and the whole volume of inspiration from first to last rests on this fact as its principle! Gen. iii. 15, Rom. i. 4, viii. 3, 1 Tim. iii. 16. The idea of a sacrifice whereby sin was to be annihilated is scoffed at in every possible variety of form and phrase, although it is not merely the language of one passage of the sacred record, but its sense and substance throughout, that Jesus *appeared in the end of the age, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself*. Heb. ix. 26. Well, so much for a systematically rational opposition to God. While those who know the truth are made to rejoice in the fact of reason, as a shadowy principle, being, in so far as divine things are concerned, swallowed up in their minds, in revelation, a substantial principle — or, to employ another mode of expressing myself, while they are made to rejoice in the process begun in them of the swallowing up of the views of man's shadowy reason in views revealed to them by God's substantial reason — the pride of man's fleshly intellect, as it comes out uncontrolled in the unregenerate, will ever shew, as it ever has shewn, its enmity to God in this, as well as in other respects, by trampling the divine principle of revelation under foot of the human principle of reason.

4th. All Pelagian and Arminian systems of religion directly, and all Calvinistic systems somewhat indirectly, afford exhibitions of man's enmity to God. The former by openly proposing terms or conditions as requisite to be performed by the creature before eternal life can be attained to and enjoyed by him, whatever these terms or conditions may be, whether faith or obedience — whether good thoughts or good works — whether a perseverance which is temporary or a perseverance which is to extend throughout the whole of life — directly, by their various systems contradict God, who, putting aside all human acts as of no avail whatever in the matter of salvation, points to Christ as *the end of the law for righteousness*, Rom. x. 4, and the fulfiller of every condition of life ever-

lasting, John xix. 30 ; and who declares that if *death* be *sin's wages*, *eternal life* is his *gift*. Rom. vi. 23, Titus iii. 5. The latter, that is, Calvinists contrive to manifest the same opposition to God, although after a somewhat more refined fashion : for they profess to regard eternal life as bestowed freely or unconditionally, and not in any respect whatever on the ground of works of righteousness which the creature has done ; and yet, by insisting on the necessity of accepting an offered salvation by means of putting forth the act of faith — an act which requires to be followed up by good works, and perseverance therein — they expose the hollowness of their pretence to regard salvation as bestowed freely : conditions of the enjoyment of life everlasting being as decidedly imposed by them, as by those whose sentiments they affect to condemn. Both parties equally contradict scripture, which, to every one to whom its meaning is made known, shews him to be even now saved in Christ Jesus, as a matter of divinely revealed fact ; and this independently of any thing done or suffered by him — in spite of anything and everything opposed to God's own nature, which is naturally in him and about him. The gospel is not now proposed to any one as a testimony which is to be believed in, which it certainly was during the period of reconciliation, or towards the close of the second æra ; Acts xvi. 31 ; but it is now always and necessarily made known at the appointed time to all the members of the church as what it is, viz., a matter of fact, — the truth of which is in no way whatever dependent on their reception or non-reception of it, — by God himself. Heb. viii. 10, 11. Every saved one is thus now not commanded to believe by God, but *taught of God*. John vi. 45 Present salvation, and the present enjoyment of salvation, are the privileges of all the members of the heaven-instructed family : the declaration of God through his word to all of them being, not that upon the performance of this condition or of that condition he may

give to them or will give to them eternal life, but that, as a matter of fact, he *hath given to them eternal life, and that this life is in his Son*. 1 John v. 11. That state of blessedness which results from this single but glorious truth being carried home to the conscience with divine power — a blessedness common to all the saved ones — conditionalizers of God's word, whether Pelagian or Calvinistic, indeed of whatever sort or creed they may be, never enjoy. Conditionalizing God's absolute promises, they manifest themselves to be God's enemies; and therefore clouds and uncertainty hang over their minds here, the infallible forerunners of that blackness of darkness in which, as excluded from the kingdom of Christ, they are involved hereafter.

5thly. Enmity to God is broadly and unequivocally stamped on every system of religion, of whatever description otherwise it may be, which proceeds on the principle of finality or perfection: in other words, which admits not of correction, enlargement, and development. It matters not whether the system thus assumed to be complete be that of the Council of Trent, gloried in by papists; that of the thirty-nine articles, upon which is founded and erected the superstructure of the Church of England; or that of the thirty-three chapters of the Westminster Confession of Faith, which has been adopted as the confession of her faith by the Church of Scotland. It matters not whether the system of religion be drawn up in set form, as among established churches and some few other sects; or float loosely in conversation, and require to be gathered by a selection from the writings of favourite authors, as is the case generally with dissenters. Let the system be what it will, whether more scriptural or less scriptural — whether that of others or that of myself — the moment it is seen to be characterised by the principle of finality, (and this it is the moment that admissibility to the privileges of church membership is seen to depend on the mind's professing to

restrict its views, its researches into and its discoveries of divine truth, within its limits,) that moment is opposition to God manifested by it as essential to its very existence. No matter in what way the restricting process comes out: enough is it that the body calling itself a church of Christ has its own religious notions circumscribed within the limits of some one particular human creed, and that it pledges all those who join its ranks to a renunciation of every view, dogma, and principle, which cannot be reconciled with that all-important document. Doubtlessly every one taught from above has and must have a creed or system of religion. That is, every such person is, while in flesh, a being of limited capacities; and therefore the degree to which at any particular period his divine knowledge extends, constitutes his creed, which he is entitled to avow, and which as an honest man he will not fail to avow, whenever a suitable opportunity of so doing is afforded to him. He will not fail to avow what God has taught him, and this to the degree to which God has taught him. In this there is not, there cannot be, anything wrong. Supposing the thirty-nine articles of the Church of England, for instance, and for the sake of argument, (a qualification to which I entreat the reader's attention, as I am not making the admission in reality,) to be, so far as they go, all true and scriptural, then the man who to-day avows them as his creed, in the event of his speaking honestly, and of his having been so far taught from above, is not deserving of censure for doing so. Making the suppositions which I have done, he merely acts the part which every straightforward and upright man, when called upon to make a confession of his faith, would act. I also have my creed. That is, there exists in my mind a system of religion, consisting of the degree to which at the present period it has pleased my Heavenly Father to carry on in me the process of spiritual illumination, through the instrumentality of his written word.

This in my present work, as has been my practice in the other works which I have published, in so far as the subject matter treated of seems to require, I am avowing. Conscience, therefore, does not in this respect charge me with guilt. And what I practise myself, I cheerfully concede to others.

Hanc veniam damus petimusque vicissim.

The moment, however, that the supposed individual, honestly just now subscribing to the truth of the thirty-nine articles, (and the observation is applicable to myself and to every other man making a present avowal of his belief,) imagines that in this creed he has learned, and embraced, and exhausted all that is heavenly and divine—that his creed is, in all its principles and details, although that of a limited being, absolutely perfect—and that it becomes him, at every future period of his life, and at all hazards, to turn a deaf ear to, and refuse to recognize more truth than that creed contains; and the moment he attempts to render his own creed, now and for ever, the exact measure of the religious views and attainments of others, refusing to sanction the slightest deviation from its averments, whatever divine authority may be pleaded for so doing; that moment does he evince the decided enmity of his mind to God. He is, in that case, making the human the test and measure of the divine—the finite, of the infinite. He is, as it were, imitating the haughty conduct of the Roman ambassador, but towards a personage of infinitely more rank and glory, in drawing a circle around God, and prescribing bounds to him whose essence it is to be boundless—boundless in the manifestations of himself, as well as in every other respect. He is, as it were, saying to God, “*Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther.*” I now know, in the creed received by me, all that is divine. All, at least, that thou art competent to teach me. I have gone to the bottom of, and have exhausted, thy discoveries of thy-

self. This, in as far as I myself am concerned. But not only so, I am determined that thou shalt communicate no farther divine knowledge to others. Rather, thou hast no more to communicate. In these thirty-nine articles (or in this confession of faith, as the case may be,) we have embraced and condensed all that is heavenly and divine; all, at any rate, which man can know, and which it is worth while for him to know; and why then should we, by permitting any alterations of it, act as if by any possibility thou couldst have farther divine instructions to impart?" Is not this to insult Jehovah? Is not this for the creature to set himself, and his paltry, limited, mixed discoveries in religion, in opposition to the Creator, and to his capability of unbounded self-manifestation? Unquestionably it is. Perhaps, indeed, a more decided speculative and theoretical form of opposition to God than this, cannot by any possibility be conceived. The creature, a necessarily limited being, takes upon himself to set bounds to—and this too, under pretence of honouring him—the unlimited one! No wonder if God, under such circumstances, and as the fair judicial infliction for these doings, leave the majority of sticklers for adherence to human systems of religion *to eat the fruit of their own devices*. Attempting to circumscribe the manifestations of himself on the part of God, and for this purpose setting up and bowing down to the brazen image of human creeds and confessions, no wonder if the result be their circumscribing their own views and attainments—their preventing their own advance in knowledge.* *Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone.* Hosea iv. 17.—Not that I oppose the use of creeds and confessions, on Socinian principles. That is, not that I

* That is, circumscribing and preventing, in so far as the creature can do, and as when left to itself it uniformly and necessarily will do: not circumscribing and preventing in the sense of their frustrating God's purpose, or of their being able to oppose any effectual barrier to the exercise of sovereignty when God may see meet to interpose.

oppose them on the grounds of reason's competency to make discoveries, which may be attended with the effect, at some future period, of setting aside the claims and discoveries of revelation. No. God forbid that I should in a matter of this kind be found making common cause with the open enemies of himself and his word. I do not subject revelation to the control of human reason, or maintain that revelation is ever capable of profiting by the discoveries, real or fancied, of literature and science. I do not believe that the mind of man is capable, even in the slightest degree, of throwing light on that which constitutes the revealed mind of God. I certainly oppose the use made of human articles of religion. But I do so on grounds the very opposite of those of Socinianism. So far from revelation being, in my apprehension, in any respect whatever dependent upon reason, I rejoice to know that reason is in all respects dependent upon revelation. And on this very ground do I take my stand, in opposition to the theory and practice of ordinary professors of what is called christianity, in subjecting their own minds, and the minds of others, to creeds and formulæ of man's devising. In divine things, reason depending on revelation, and not revelation on reason, and this on God's own authority, 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15, iii. 19—21, to act as is commonly done, in making the human articles, not the word of God, the test of truth, is to fly in the face of divinely revealed fact, that is, in the face of God himself. This, however, as naturally God's enemy, mere man ever has done, and ever will do : ever will attempt to bound the infinite by the finite ; to embrace the substance by the shadow. And pure Socinianism, or Rationalism, is merely the reducing to system of this irrepressible tendency of man's mind. Opposed to all this, what I contend for is, that while the record of revelation is and for eighteen hundred years has been complete, God hath not yet taught any individual, or any body of individuals, all the

truths which, when fully opened up by himself, that record will be found to contain and disclose. That he hath not yet developed all the deep principles upon which these truths rest, all the ramifications into which they run out, all the harmony which subsists among them, and all the consequences which they involve. And that he is capable of conveying, as it is actually his purpose to convey,—not after a miraculous fashion or by new recorded revelations, but by the gradual opening up, in the course of his providence, of the record already given,—higher and higher views of himself, and more and more correct views of the relation in which man stands to him, than any which have ever yet been vouchsafed to, or conceived of by the most spiritually enlightened of his saints. Those higher and more correct views modifying and enlarging (*never contradicting*) discoveries of himself which he has already made. Farther, what I contend for is, that in proportion to the increased divine discoveries of which I am speaking, (not in proportion to, or in consequence of the advance of human reason, but in diametrical opposition to it,) will the darkness of the human mind be overcome, the mist of human errors be dispelled, and the truth of God be seen invested with its own divine and heavenly attributes and properties. This view of mine is certainly the very opposite of Socinianism, indeed, of every *ism*, which, in whatever form, sets up human reason, or the discoveries real or pretended of the human mind, as either the test, standard, and limit of God's truth, or the means of its advancement. Now, to sum up: it is to this unlimited power of God to make himself known through his written word, that creeds, articles, and confessions of all sorts, as necessarily emanations from the limited mind of man, whenever employed to dam up the progress of divine discovery, and prescribe to man the bounds within which his religious notions must be confined, set themselves in opposition. As arrogating to man the prerogative

of having already learned all that God can teach him, and as founded upon the principle that the scriptures are now superfluous,—man having extracted from them, and condensed into human formularies, the only valuable information which they contain—they insult God, presenting one of the most sad and humiliating spectacles of the creature's enmity to the Creator which it is possible to conceive.

Strong and decided as these speculative exhibitions of man's enmity to God are,—and it is impossible to conceive any stronger or more decided, besides that they are found proceeding more or less from all human systems of religion,—it is but too probable that, on the same principle of inability to comprehend divine things which made the Pharisees of old insist on having *a sign* from our blessed Lord, the comparatively gross understandings of some who have had the patience to read thus far,—and whose understanding, alas! is not *gross* as to divine truth?—may entreat for some specimen, or specimens, of the opposition of human systems of religion to God, more evident, more tangible, and more to them satisfactory than any which I have yet given.

Well, such persons I will try to gratify. But briefly. At the same time let me be permitted to protest that, in what I am about to state, it is far from being my wish to speak invidiously or exclusively. External opposition to God, on the part of human systems, coming out in a form so gross and so offensive as even superficially instructed christians may see, I certainly mean to advert to. But, if I point to systems, which, in a most marked and prominent manner set themselves in opposition to God, it is not that I may confine attention to them, or withdraw attention from others, but that I may suggest the carnality and censurableness of that opposition, wherever and among whomsoever its features are to be detected.

The two following instances will, I presume, be accounted sufficient.

1st. Rationalism proceeds on the broadly avowed principle of rejecting or explaining away every view of revelation, or what claims to be recognised as revelation, which cannot be made to square with the dictates of human reason. Reason, not revelation, must, according to this system, decide as to what is true and divine. Reason rejects the supreme deity of Jesus Christ; reason rejects the efficacy, in cleansing from all sin, ascribed to his atoning sacrifice; reason rejects the idea of his righteousness being the only righteousness of guilty creatures; reason rejects the doctrine of the absolute and sovereign election of his church; reason rejects the notion of eternal punishment.* Therefore such doctrines either are not found in revelation, or, if so, should not be there. What is this but an exhibition of man's enmity to God and his word: seeing that it either sets revelation aside altogether, by identifying its statements with those of reason; or, what is worse than directly and openly setting it aside, pretends to own its separate existence, at the expense of making it, and its divine Author, man's inferior, and this, by subjecting all God's declarations concerning himself to the scrutiny, judgment, and censure of his mere creatures? "This," say you, "is evident. We admit that all systems of Rationalism, in whatever form they may appear, betray opposition to God."

2ndly. The Church of Rome, the Greek Church, and our modern Tractarians or Puseyites, all proceed on the open and broadly avowed principle of the Church of Christ being

* Scripture proclaims the doctrine of eternal punishment, not that of eternal torments. Human nature is eternally punished by being eternally destroyed, through being swallowed up in the divine nature of Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. xv. 26, 54; not eternally tormented at the expense of keeping up an eternal rival to Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. xv. 25, of rendering sin eternal, 1 Tim. vi. 16, and of denying the scripturally revealed facts of our Lord having put away sin, Heb. ix. 26, swallowed up death in victory, 1 Cor. xv. 54, 2 Cor. v. 4, and destroyed the works of the devil. 1 John iii. 8.

external and earthly. Founded on earthly principles, availing themselves of earthly expedients, and aiming at earthly ends, the God of this world is evidently at once their origin, and the object of their worship. To such shameless lengths, indeed, has the effrontery of the Church of Rome proceeded, that she has scarcely even had the delicacy to throw a veil over her nakedness, by pretending to conformity to the glorified Jesus: the Pope, not he whose vicar or representative that Pope claims to be, being her sole and supreme legislator;* and earthly intrigues, earthly success, and, above all, the recovery of earthly influence, not the diffusion of heavenly views and principles, being clearly the grand and exclusive object of all her efforts. Earthliness is thus the characteristic of the Romish Church.† But the Church of Christ is heavenly.‡ Hence, two churches obviously stand opposed the one to the other: and, in setting up and maintaining an earthly church of Christ, in opposition to God declaring that Christ's church is heavenly, Popery clearly displays its anti-christian character, and brings out its enmity to God. "Stop; we are again satisfied. Certainly, in the system of Romanism, as well as in that of her sister the Greek church, and in that of her offspring the Puseyite community, we see embodied, in a speculative or theoretical form, the opposition of the human mind to God."

* Practically so, that is, truly so. The doctrine of general councils controlling him is mere fudge. The Council of Trent is more than probably the last body of that kind which the Roman Catholic church has seen, or ever will see. At all events, any Pope who should summon another would in so doing shew himself to be an egregious fool.—Even, however, if general councils constitute the supreme authority among Roman Catholics, that makes nothing against my argument. For, granting this, it is enough for me that in the case supposed mere human beings, men of earthly minds and actuated by earthly principles, not Jesus Christ and his inspired apostles, are the supreme regulators of their affairs. See James iii. 15.

† See Rev. xiii. throughout. Not that I mean to confine the views presented in that wonderful chapter to popery.

‡ Rev. xiv. 1—5.

Thus, then, in two respects have I succeeded in satisfying you of the existence of speculative enmity to God on the part of bodies of individuals not expressly denying the revelation which he hath given of himself.

You see, that Rationalists oppose God, in subjecting his revelation of himself to human reason, instead of subjecting their reason to his revelation of himself.*

You see also, that Roman Catholics oppose God, in making the church of Christ earthly, while, according to God himself, it is heavenly.

Well, so far we have come to an understanding of each other.

Now, let me prefer one request to you.

Do not be satisfied with applying what you have learned merely to others. Have the goodness to suspect that, perhaps,

De te fabula narretur;

Or rather, adopting the language of holy writ, hear God

* Not that any man can subject his own reason to revelation. One grand object of this work, as well as of my "Divine Inversion," has been to shew that he cannot. And what is of infinitely more consequence, God's object in bringing revelation under man's notice in the course of his adorable providence, is to make man shew that he cannot. Were man capable of subjecting his reason to revelation in any case and to any degree whatever, then might Satan be represented as inclined and able to cast out Satan, an idea the realisation of which our Lord argues is absurd and impossible. Matt. xii. 24—30. Revelation overcomes the resistance of fleshly reason, not by reason's aid, but in reason's spite: God himself enlightening the eyes of the understanding through his word, and in the very act of so doing superseding the previous shadowy views of man's rational mind by the substantial views of his own divine mind. See 1 Cor. ii. from verse 5th to the end. *Men are made willing in the day of God's power*; but their willingness is not in any respect whatever the cause of God's illumination, as all Pelagians and persons tainted with Pelagian sentiments allege; it is solely, although necessarily, the result of such divine illumination. Psalm cx. 3; see also 1 John iv. 19. There is a passage in the third page of the "Diegesis" of that poor and misguided but clever infidel, Robert Taylor, which shews that he even had some glimpses of this truth. It is interesting to see an avowed opponent of revelation beating down its pretended Pelagian supporters by means of such a Hercules' club as this.

saying to you, as by the mouth of the prophet Nathan of old he said to David, *Thou art the man!* 2 Sam. xii. 7. Be assured that the practice of trying things divine by human reason is not confined to Rationalists; and that the Roman Catholics are not the only body of individuals chargeable with degrading the church of Christ by making it earthly. Be prepared to find the same principles in active operation, although not perhaps to the same extent, elsewhere. Have they no place in yourself, and among your own partisans? If so, remember that general principles admit not of a partial application. What is censurable in Rationalists and Roman Catholics, is equally censurable in yourselves. If by you human reason be in any respect whatever adopted as the standard of divine truth; if by you the church of the glorified Jesus, which is solely and essentially heavenly in its nature, be in any respect whatever invested with an earthly form; you are, in so doing, treading in the footsteps of those whom you have just condemned, and, like them, are manifesting your enmity to God. The censure which you have just unhesitatingly been inflicting on others, recoils in that case with stern and impartial justice on your own heads.

SECTION SIXTH.

OBSERVATIONS EXPLANATORY AND CONCLUDING.

Such is a brief and rapid enumeration of the leading features, practical and speculative, by which, during the currency of this third and last æra of the world, the enmity of man to God is distinguished.

I say, during the currency of this third and last æra; for, what I have been speaking of, bating a few insignificant details, are not exhibitions of man's enmity confined to the

present day, but have been making their appearance, more or less, since the æra commenced.

Nor is it my intention to confine the exhibition in question altogether even to this æra; for, in every period since man's existence, or at all events since man's transgressions began, the *lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life*, 1 John ii. 16, of which, as the only principles of human nature, these exhibitions are results, have been in operation.

Enmity to God, however, it has been my purpose to suggest by means of the sensual, intellectual, and religious phenomena described, has during this present æra fuller opportunities for its display, is characterised by a more decided intensity, and is making a more remarkable progress than during the previous ages of the world. There are now no miraculous interpositions on God's part to check and restrain it; there is now ample scope afforded to its operations; God, to the eye of flesh and sense, appears to have left man entirely to himself, a liberty,—although in reality the very essence of bondage, being unrestricted bondage to his own earthly and hateful nature, John viii. 34, 35, Rom. vi. 16—20, James i. 14, 2 Pet. ii. 19,—of which he has not been slow to avail himself. And, besides the consequences naturally and necessarily flowing negatively from the removal of checks, we are to take into account likewise all the positive promptings to the indulgence of the tendencies of human nature, which a highly cultivated state of society imparts. Nor is this all. Navigation, commerce, conquest, the art of printing, and improved systems of government have, during the existence of the present æra, broken down the barriers which in former times impeded the intercourse of mankind with one another. Man, therefore, now “struts his little hour,” on a stage wider, and with a measure of light thrown upon his movements larger than at any previous period of his history. Nor has the opportunity for displaying his enmity yet attained to its acmé.

The progress of society in civilization and refinement—the almost indefinite career of advance in literature, and science, and morals, upon which it has entered—are merely providing him with constantly increasing occasions for shewing what the nature and extent of his opposition to God are. But more of this in the next chapter.

I am far from wishing it to be received and understood as my opinion, that all who are connected with, and rank among the supporters of systems of religion which are in the main unscriptural and antichristian—which in the main betray enmity to God—are therefore themselves to be set down as necessarily destitute of the earnest of divine mind, and excluded from the pale of salvation. Had such a restricted view of what constitutes the members of the church been correct, Rev. xviii. 4,* and similar passages had never, under divine influence, been penned. And so far from entertaining such a restricted view, I hold that the very opposite is matter of fact. Among the most unscriptural communities, and the most antichristian associations, is to be found existing and read that word of God, the knowledge of the spiritual meaning of which, in however minute a degree implanted in the mind, is the principle of salvation and life everlasting. John xvii. 3. Therefore it is I am satisfied that probably in most if not all of these communities and associations, one or more, *some* are to be found who either to a less or a greater degree have been taught from above, and thereby *made partakers of the divine nature*. 2 Peter i. 4. But then, as these systems are opposed to God, the persons thus taught from above are so, not by means, but in spite of the systems in which they have been nurtured; they are in heart, *so far as they know the truth*, not one with, but opposed to the bodies with which

* *And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.*

they are externally associated ; and so long as they continue to be members of and to support such bodies, they are dreadfully fettered and hampered in their spiritual career. Not quitting such fleshly associations, they are, as God has forewarned, *partakers* more or less of *their plagues*. Rev. xviii. 4 ; also 2 Cor. vi. 14—18. Blessed be God, however, some of his people are, from time to time, brought out of such disadvantageous circumstances. Enabled by grace to break loose from the bonds by which they were previously held, or, rather, extricated from their most unseemly companionship with the wicked by divine power put forth in the shape of further divine illumination, they are made thenceforward to breathe an atmosphere of life, liberty, and love.

The existence in their minds, then, of the earnest of the knowledge and love of God through Christ Jesus, not the existence of fleshly tendencies and the exhibition of fleshly phenomena, is what distinguishes the people of God from a *world which lieth in wickedness*, 1 John v. 19. The latter they have and display in common, alas ! with all the descendants of Adam, for between them and others, in this respect, *there is* by nature *no difference*, Rom. iii. 22 ; the former, which is a principle entirely opposed to flesh and to all fleshly results, Gal. v. 17, is peculiar to them, John xvii. 17, and only in exact proportion as by divine teaching, through the word, it is enlarged and strengthened, do its effects, not only in producing phenomena peculiar to itself, Gal. v. 22, 23, but in *crucifying* the flesh, with its affections and lusts*, Ibid. 24, become more and more apparent.

* Crucifying, and thereby putting to death,—a certain although a slow and lingering death. *Εσταυρωσαν*. See the same idea beautifully brought out in Rom. vi. 6 ; where, as in the passage quoted in the text, there is a manifest allusion to the death undergone by our blessed Lord. The fact is, that the divine nature standing diametrically opposed to human nature, Gal. v. 17, also Rom. vii. 23, tends not to its restraint, but to its destruction. 'To put restraints upon itself in certain respects human nature is, through law, more or less com-

This leads me to observe, in order to guard myself against all mistakes as to or misrepresentations of my meaning, that although opposition to God is, in the various ways which I have been enumerating, and in an infinitude of others, evinced,—enmity to God being the basis and source, being indeed the very essence of man's nature,*—yet none of the ordinary phenomena of human nature, nor all of them put together, constitute the grand exhibition of enmity to God which is now being made by the human mind. That exhibition is simple and easily defined. Man's rejecting God's revealed scheme of a salvation which is personally, presently, and gratuitously, that is certainly enjoyed through his own Son—man's rejecting life everlasting as a gift freely bestowed upon himself through Christ Jesus—and his setting up, instead of and in opposition to all this, an imaginary salvation of his own, the enjoyment of which is dependent on a condition, or on conditions which require to be performed by himself and others—is the grand way in which, during this third and present æra, man is shewing himself to be the enemy of God. And for the purpose of allowing man to display his enmity after this fashion, and to the greatest possible extent, was this present æra begun, and is it continued.

To which I may add, as still further explanatory of my meaning, that all the various forms of enmity to God which

petent; Rom. ii. 14, 15, 1 Tim. i. 8—10; to destroy human nature, however, whether slowly or at once, through the medium of creating it anew in Jesus glorified, belongs only to the divine nature. The partial destruction of it in the minds of the church in time is effected through the medium of a crucifying process, by means of divine light and love, making gradual inroads on human darkness and enmity; the complete destruction of it, in the bodies as well as minds of the church, is effected at the period of the fulness of Christ's second coming, when the corruptible is superseded by the incorruptible, and the mortal by the immortal.

* See Rom. vii. 14—25, Gal. v. 16—25. The subject I have attempted to illustrate in my "Divine Inversion."

I have just been going over, while they spring from the same principles of human nature to which opposition to God's proclamation of life everlasting being unconditionally bestowed owes its origin, may also in some measure be regarded as so many tests and standards, as well as accompaniments, of the degree to which man's hatred of a free salvation extends. In proportion as the doctrine of eternal life being God's gift is hated, in the same proportion may all the other exhibitions of enmity to God just spoken of be expected to abound.* And just so, on the other hand, wherever the principle of the knowledge of a free, present, and personal salvation is introduced by God himself into the heart and conscience—wherever men are made to see themselves certainly one with Christ Jesus, and therefore certainly saved in him now and for ever, the only way in which God brings his saved ones out of the world—there, and there only, may we expect to find human nature, *in all its tendencies*,† subjected to a crucifying process. The reason of which is, on the one hand, that where the knowledge and enjoyment of a free salvation and life everlasting are not,—this knowledge and this enjoyment being the only divine principles which, during this time state, can exist in any man,—there not only does human nature range and operate uncontrolled by any higher principle, (the

* Bad as Protestant countries are, certainly they will bear a comparison with advantage to themselves in point of morals with countries where Popery prevails, and where consequently the doctrine of a free salvation is absolutely overwhelmed by doctrines and practices which stand directly opposed to it. Compare for instance Great Britain with the Roman Catholic portion of Ireland, Holland with Spain, Protestant Germany with Italy.

† In all its tendencies, I say: for it is not to crucify human nature, to establish the superiority of intellect over sense, to sacrifice animal gratifications to the lust of wealth or power, or to supersede vicious human institutions by such as are calculated to promote the temporal comfort and advantages of mankind. Society may and does benefit by such changes; but they are not exhibitions of the divine nature. They merely evince one human principle, or set of human principles, played off against another; and they imply the strengthening, not the weakening, of the principle of human enmity to God.

only restraints upon man, as possessed of limited capacity being the impossibility of gratifying all the propensities of his fleshly mind at once, and the control, therefore, which one of these exercises over another, and as a member of society being the risque attendant on unbounded indulgence;) but there also does the stimulation of any one propensity of man's nature, and especially of that hatred of unconditionally bestowed divine blessings which is the strongest propensity residing in his bosom, tend, in so far as they can be indulged without jostling and interfering one with another, to rouse, excite, and stimulate into exercise every other propensity.* And, on the other hand, that the knowledge and enjoyment of a free salvation, as the earnest of the divine nature, and consequently as a principle both superior and opposed to human nature as a whole, tends necessarily to the destruction, by means of the superseding of such principles and propensities as are merely human. Gal. v. 24. See also John iii. 6. Human nature is a soil in which every weed tends to grow rank and luxuriant. The knowledge of a salvation which is free and which belongs to us, as being a heavenly principle, and as thereby lifting us above the world, alone commences the process of grubbing them up and destroying them. Where, then, this divine knowledge and heavenly principle—the only divine and heavenly principle which can exist in any man while in flesh,—is not; and where, consequently, the disposition to set up the idol of a creature salvation has, by hearing the gospel with the outward ear and understanding it with the fleshly mind, been roused into activity; there, in connexion with the display of this grand proof of hatred to God, will be the display of other evil and hateful propensities.

* That is, all the principles and propensities of man's nature, however invisible and sometimes incomprehensible may be the bond of union subsisting among them, have at bottom an inseparable connexion one with another. Enmity to God is certainly one respect in which they all agree.

Stimulate human nature to act in its most offensive form, you stimulate it also to act in every other form. Man resisting God's system of free salvation, and carrying out his resistance to it to the extent of setting up in opposition to it systems of conditional salvation of his own devising, is thereby quickened also to the resistance, both theoretically and practically, as occasion serves and inclination prompts, of every other principle which is heavenly and divine. The abounding of such exhibitions of enmity to God, as in a preceding part of this chapter I have been enumerating, may therefore fairly and properly be assumed as an evidence of the abounding of man's enmity to the doctrine of life everlasting being freely bestowed: the more that man evinces his hatred to God in this latter respect, the greater being the tendency to evince his hatred to God in every other respect.

CHAPTER V.

AN ATTEMPT TO SKETCH THE FUTURE PROGRESS AND TERMINATION OF MAN'S ENMITY TO GOD.

SECTION FIRST.

PRELIMINARY.

HITHERTO we have been dealing principally with matters of history, and with a state of things which is at present existing. But, over and above what regards time past and present, it is asserted by us that the æra which began at the period of Jerusalem's destruction, or rather when miracles and prophecy ceased, and which is now running on, is to continue till the end of time; the same opposition to God, in the same form, although manifesting itself with a constantly increasing intensity, characterising the remainder of the period, which has characterised the past portion of it. In so doing, we lay ourselves open to and encounter an objection, which must be acknowledged to carry on the face of it a tolerably fair shew of plausibility.

“Granting that man may now be exhibiting, and that from the days of the apostles he may have exhibited enmity to God, in the form of resisting and perverting the gospel, how do you make it appear that this form of enmity, or even that the enmity itself is to continue till the end of time? For

aught you know, or can prove to the contrary, there may be, as we are satisfied there will be, in future times, in connexion with and as the result of the universal spread of the gospel, such a conquest of this enmity, as shall issue in all or the great majority of mankind becoming righteous—as shall render this present world, what it never yet has been, a terrestrial paradise.”

The strength of this objection, if any strength it have, lies not so much in the way in which the objection itself is propounded, as in this, that as now there are no miraculous endowments, and no persons who can with truth claim to be miraculously endowed, so now no person can, without the most daring and impious presumption, claim to be possessed of the gift of prophecy.

To pretend dogmatically to assert, independently of what God himself hath declared on the subject, what events are to take place hereafter during the subsistence of this present world, is, to say nothing more harsh concerning it, arrant folly—betrays, indeed, not the strength of human sagacity, but the extreme of human weakness.

Notwithstanding this, however, the following preliminary remarks may be suggested, tending, in so far as the objectors themselves are concerned, to take off the edge of their weapon :—

1. The man who maintains that this present earth, or the earth in its present form, shall at some future period of its existence become a paradise, through the means of the preaching and spread of the gospel, acting the part of a prophet himself, can scarcely, with any regard to decency, fling a charge of prophesying at the head of an antagonist. The old and musty proverb which hints to the proprietors of glass houses the necessity of caution in throwing stones, here forcibly applies. At all events, in the case of any individual hazarding such views respecting the future felicity of the

human race on this earth, through the spread of the gospel, as those to which I am alluding, and opposing them to mine, the whole amounts merely to the setting up of the dogma of one human being against the dogma of another human being—the truth of the one, or of the other, or of neither, falling to be determined by the issue; or, if men will not be contented to wait patiently for that, the appeal lying only to that infallible tribunal, the word of God.

2. The only man who has even the shadow of a right to cast the objection that I am prophesying in my teeth, is the man who can with honesty and truth declare, that he entertains no views, and has no anticipations whatever, respecting the future state of things while this world endures. And yet if I can shew that my anticipations correspond to God's declarations on the subject, or rather, if I allow God's declarations on the subject to speak, then, besides sheltering myself from a charge of prophesying behind the broad buckler of him who is the Almighty and the all-wise One, and allowing the shafts aimed at me to fall on him who is able not only to parry but also to retort with interest every assault, I shew, that over the class of objectors of whom I am now treating, I enjoy the advantage of having had a measure of understanding of God's word bestowed on me, of which, by their own avowal, they themselves are destitute.

Having submitted these remarks respecting the persons themselves by whom the supposed objection as to my prophesying may be made, before entering directly on the subject of man's future prospects on this earth, I understand the following things to be conceded on the part of opponents, just as I am prepared to make what appears to me a very important concession myself.

On the part of antagonists, I understand it to be conceded that, up to the present day, from the period of the apostles, almost all, if not all systems of religion proceed on the

principle of salvation and life everlasting being, in one way or another, conditionally enjoyed. Should this be denied, the most ample and satisfactory evidence of its truth is at hand. Out of their own mouths are all sects and sectarians, as to this matter, capable of being convicted.* But I do not anticipate any general denial of this. On the contrary, I am prepared to hear the great majority of those who are commonly denominated Christians glorying in the idea of conditions of salvation, of one sort or another, being indispensable; and deeming any other view of the matter to be not only the height of folly, but calculated to lead, if acted on, to the grossest licentiousness. "Without union to the church—or without the sacraments, as defined by the holy Catholic body—or without baptism and the participation of the Lord's supper—or without faith and good works—or without faith, apart from good works—or without perseverance to the end—or without some other condition performed by the creature, with or without assistance from above, it is impossible that any one can be saved." This is quite enough for me. Should the concession which I demand be refused, this is equivalent to a formal statement of it. As to the few who may feel inclined to dispute the conditionality of their own views, and on that ground to dispute the conditionality of the views of what has been considered the church of Christ in past ages, the question is capable of being brought to a very short issue: "Do you see eternal life to be yours, and to belong to others, freely and as matter of fact, independently of every thing and anything required to be done by you, either in time past, now, or in time to come? Or, as indispensable to salvation, do you insist on the necessity of faith, on the necessity of love and self-denied obedience, on the necessity

* See this proved at great length,—perhaps even *usque ad nauseam*,—in the fourth chapter of my "Assurance of Faith," entitled "Calvinism as regards eternal life inconsistent with itself."

of perseverance to the end, or on the necessity of any other act, whether internal or external, or both, being performed?" If you answer: "I see eternal life to be mine, and to be also the property of others, as unconditionally bestowed;" 1 John v. 11; then, instead of being antagonists, we are at one. Only do not contradict yourself, and shew that you are speaking of that which you do not understand, by afterwards admitting the necessity of the performance of conditions on the part of the creature. But if you answer: "My personal enjoyment of life everlasting, and the personal enjoyment of it on the part of others, is dependent upon faith, or on something else;" then as you admit eternal life to be conditionally bestowed, however strenuously you may contend in set phraseology for the freeness of the blessing, how can you expect to be believed? You say expressly that "it depends on faith," and we merely take you at your word. Faith is your "condition of life everlasting." They to whom it has been given to see eternal life to be really and certainly their own, now and for ever, and this because bestowed upon them unconditionally in Christ Jesus by God himself, Rom. vi. 23, 1 John v. 11, are the only persons who can claim an exemption from the charge, applicable to all others, of conditionalising the blessings of the gospel. That is, they alone are exempted from the charge of representing God as bestowing, on the ground of some condition or conditions performed or to be performed by the creature, blessings which he represents himself as bestowing unconditionally. All such persons, as a matter of course, will at once admit the conditionalising views of those bodies of individuals, which, since the days of the apostles, have arrogated to themselves the rank of christian churches. This, however, is not what I am now requiring. I require a concession, on the part of those who anticipate such a wide spread and amazing influence of Christianity in some future age of this world as shall overcome man's

natural enmity to God, of the fact that conditional notions of salvation,—these conditional notions being the present grand exhibition of man's enmity to God,—have in past ages prevailed, and do at the present day prevail, in what they regard and would fain represent as christian communities. A concession which, either in so many words, or by means of representations of what they themselves deem Christianity, brought out in conversation, sermons, or writings of greater pretension, I find no great difficulty in extracting from their lips.

On my part it is conceded, that the scriptures will sooner or later be translated into every language, and a knowledge of their contents externally sooner or later be conveyed to every land. As a consequence of which, what is commonly denominated heathenism will in process of time cease and disappear. Bible societies and missionary exertions, the conquests achieved by arms, and the more peaceful triumphs of commerce, are, along with other causes, evidently tending towards this result. The object of God in bringing about this spread of his word to every land, I conceive to be, to render his present and last experiment upon human nature complete. Men who, as heathens, have hitherto been exhibiting enmity to God in an inferior degree under debasing and degrading forms of religion, are afterwards to have the opportunity of exhibiting enmity to him in the highest possible degree, under the form of what is commonly considered and denominated Christianity. Be this as it may, however,—for the subject just alluded to it is my intention subsequently to treat,—such is the concession which I make. The scriptures shall be read ultimately in every tongue, and paganism shall vanish away. The persons who wish to spread the scriptures, and thereby to promote the reception of a form of Christianity throughout the whole earth, may, in so far as my convictions and admissions are concerned in the

matter, rely upon their most ardent wishes and anticipations being realised. Whether by the extirpation of the aboriginal races and the substitution for them of European settlers and their descendants, or by a change of views effected in the minds of the aboriginal races themselves, a natural understanding of the scriptures, and the reception of what are commonly regarded as their leading doctrines by the fleshly mind, are, I am satisfied, in one way or another, and at a period earlier or more remote, to characterise human beings in general.

SECTION SECOND.

ANTAGONISTIC VIEWS RESPECTING THE STATE OF THINGS
DURING THE REMAINING PORTION OF THE EXISTENCE
OF THE PRESENT WORLD. A STATEMENT OF THE PRIN-
CIPLES ON WHICH I PROCEED IN JUDGING WITH REFER-
ENCE TO THIS SUBJECT.

These things being premised, and these mutual concessions being understood, I now observe,

That, according to antagonists, in consequence of the great spread of knowledge, especially religious knowledge, in future ages of this world, the enmity of man to God shall be more and more subdued, and a state of things be introduced, which shall more and more assimilate earth to heaven: mankind as a whole ultimately being filled with love to God and love to one another. And,

That, according to the views which I have gathered from scripture, the great spread of knowledge both secular and religious, which I am satisfied is destined to take place in future ages of this world, will merely afford an opportunity for, as well as contribute to give birth to, a far more decided

and awful exhibition of man's enmity to God than has ever yet made its appearance.

Perhaps I shall express my meaning more correctly if I say, that God in future,—and principally by means of the spread of his word,—will continue carrying on, until he shall have conducted to the highest pitch of conclusiveness and thereby to maturity, that experiment upon human nature, having for its object to bring to light the depths of the inherent enmity of man to himself, which he began at the close of the apostolic age, which is now proceeding, and which is destined only to terminate with the termination of this present world.*

Such are the two precisely opposite issues to which, in the apprehension of antagonists on the one hand, and of myself on the other, matters in a future age of this present world are tending. It is most evident, not only that it is impossible for both of us to be in the right, but that of necessity one of us must be most fearfully in the wrong.

Leaving to adversaries to justify their own view of the subject-matter at issue between us as they best can, and to add publication after publication to the numerous works in favour of their theory under which the press has long groaned—leaving them to appeal to the fleshly understandings of men, and to get a credulous multitude to gulp down one after another the ever changing vagaries respecting the future destinies of our race in this time state, to which human learning, human ingenuity, and human folly are incessantly giving birth—I now proceed, without any desire or hope of convincing the multitude,—indeed, dreading to do so, from my conviction that the broad and easy way in

* Briefly, the future advance of mankind in secular knowledge, and in fleshly knowledge of religion, will merely tend to carry out that exhibition of man's enmity to God, which is now taking place, to its greatest degree of intensity.

matters of religion always and necessarily leads to destruction, Matt. vii. 13, 14,—to state and justify, with earnestness and yet with sobriety of mind, and looking up to God for guidance and for a blessing on my labours, in “the fitting audience of a few” taught from above, the view in regard to this present subject with which, by means of the scriptures, I have been made acquainted.

The following constitute the leading scriptural principles upon which rest my anticipations respecting the state of matters which is to be developed during the future portion of the existence of this present world:—

First. The unchangeableness of human nature throughout the whole period of its existence and history. It was not at the fall only—at the deluge only—at Mount Sinai only—in the wilderness only—or in the days of the apostles only—that the mind of flesh was enmity against God. It was so from its origin—it is so now—and it will continue to be so until human nature shall be no more. The proposition that the mind of flesh is enmity against God—that it is not subject to his law, neither indeed is able to be so—is general and universal: it admits not of a single exception, or of the possibility of an exception.*

Secondly. The great spread of religious no less than of secular knowledge in future ages. To this fact, it strikes me, the scriptures both of the Old and the New Testaments bear frequent and decided attestation. Daniel xii. 4, &c. &c. Scripture translated into every language—Biblical criticism improved—the progress of education—amazing exertions on the part of teachers of religion—a great and almost universal interest in the subject on the part of the taught—and a variety of other causes, will contribute to this result.

* Except in the case of Him who appeared *in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh*, Rom. viii. 3, if that divine and glorious personage can with propriety be spoken of as an exception.

Thirdly. The greater opportunity for the display of man's enmity to God which a more complete bringing of the religion of Jesus externally under his notice, and a more constant appeal on the part of the gospel to his fleshly understanding, are calculated to afford. As the abounding of law gave occasion to the abounding of sin, Rom. v. 20, new and additional prohibitions affording opportunities for new and additional transgressions; so will the abounding of the knowledge of the scriptures upon natural principles give occasion for the abounding of displays of man's enmity to the grand truth which these scriptures involve and proclaim. Man's mind, in proportion as it is left to itself and allowed full scope for its exercise, must shew itself to be, not what it is not, but what it is. Enmity to God it is. Enmity to God, therefore, the fuller the opportunities for the manifestation of itself are, the more decidedly it must shew itself to be. Such opportunities in the highest degree are afforded, by the highest degree of understanding of the scriptures upon fleshly principles.

Fourthly. The tendency of divine truth to rouse in opposition to itself all the activity and energy of man's mind. Man in future times will have increased opportunities of manifesting his enmity to the gospel: but he will have more: he will be more stimulated than heretofore to take advantage of these. The gospel, I have no doubt, will to the church be more clearly made known, will in their minds be more decidedly freed from foreign and adventitious admixtures, and will by them be more distinctly stated, at a future period of this world, than it ever hitherto has been. And the more distinctly it is brought out, as its native and necessary opposition to fleshly mind, and to all that emanates from fleshly mind, will thereby become more apparent, so the more will the opposition of fleshly mind to it be drawn forth and stimulated. Remember we must that if *spirit lusteth against*

flesh, this is of necessity productive of the lusting of flesh against spirit; these two being *contrary the one to the other*. Gal. v. 17. A truth which, like the announcement that salvation and life everlasting are conferred by God in the form of a free gift, levels all human distinctions—a truth which, in so far as a heavenly state is concerned, annihilates every advantage which is to be derived from superior rank, superior abilities, and superior morals—cannot anticipate any very favourable or friendly reception in a highly cultivated state of human society. Nay, must by men in such a state,—must by the high born, and the highly enlightened, and the highly moral, upon whose superiority as supposed to lay the foundation for a claim to spiritual distinctions it looks down with the most sovereign contempt,—be hated with the utmost intensity of hatred. Unjust would such individuals be to themselves, and to the principles upon which the natural progress of society is conducted, if they did not make every effort to put down and crush a doctrine which represents their most strenuous exertions to make man a perfect being upon earth as so many indications of hatred to Jehovah; and which represents the progress of mankind in knowledge and civilization as, so far from promoting their enjoyment of salvation and life everlasting, to be directly and diametrically opposed to, and contradictory of the attainment of views and privileges which are heavenly and divine. I say, views which have it for their professed object to exalt man, not merely here but hereafter, through the medium of improving his earthly mind and his earthly condition, as those of fleshly mind do,—finding themselves brought into immediate contact and collision with a view the avowed object of which is to exalt God at the expense of man, through the medium of superseding man's condition and man's nature by the heavenly state and nature, as that of divine mind does,—cannot by any possibility be productive

of sentiments towards it other than those of the most active, deadly, and ever-during hatred.

Fifthly. The uniformity and unchangeableness of the purpose of God. This we know from scripture has been, and this we observe from experience still is, not to communicate the knowledge of himself during this time-state to all, but only to a very limited portion of the human race. *Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it.* Matt. vii. 14. And it is *the purpose of God, according to election*, or as selecting a few out of the many, *which thus stood and stands.* Rom. ix. 11. Nor does the word of God confine the application of this purpose of election to past or present time merely. The declarations of scripture concerning it are so general and comprehensive, as to take in God's administration of human affairs in connexion with the manifestation of the truth till the end of the world. Upon this principle, then, prosecuted by God in all the past ages, and intended to be acted upon by him in all the future ages of this world, as he has overcome, so he will overcome the native enmity of the human mind to himself, only in the case of comparatively speaking a very small number of the children of men. His intention is, as it all along has been, that human nature shall display itself in all respects and thoroughly to be what it really is; and therefore to the great majority of mankind, enlightened to a very high, let me rather say to the very highest possible degree secularly, and religiously upon fleshly principles, shall the fullest opportunities be vouchsafed for shewing what the native enmity against God existing in the mind of man is, and is capable of effecting. Nay, to them shall be applied, in the fullest extent, all that stimulus to display their enmity which the clearest possible statements and illustrations of the gospel can afford.

My readers are now put in possession of the leading prin-

ciples on which, in judging of the future state of matters in this world, I proceed.

These are, man's native and necessary enmity to God—the great spread of secular and fleshly religious knowledge—the increasing opportunities afforded by an advanced and advancing state of human society for displays of opposition to divine truth—the increasing stimulus given to the energetic operation of human enmity, by clearer and more scriptural statements of religion on the part of those by whom the subject is understood—and the purpose of God to separate from the world only the members of his church.

If these principles can be overturned by an appeal to the scriptures, let it be done. Only, I would scarcely recommend any one to make the attempt.

So much for my principles: now for their application.

SECTION THIRD.

APPLICATION OF MY PRINCIPLES. GREAT PROGRESS OF MANKIND AS TIME ROLLS ON IN LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND FLESHLY RELIGION.

Mankind are destined to a great, a rapid, and a most extraordinary advance in the paths of literature and science. Great as is the progress in these departments of human knowledge which has distinguished the last two centuries, and more especially the last forty or fifty years, this will be, I am satisfied, found to be as nothing, when compared with that bright and brilliant career of intellectual discovery which the future ages of the world are destined to witness.

Accompanying progress in this respect, there will almost of necessity be progress in civilization and refinement. Govern-

ment, theoretically and practically, will be simplified and improved. Many grievances under which society now labours will be redressed. The external comforts of human beings will be promoted. And tendencies towards the melting of the various races existing among mankind, at all events of the civilized nations of the earth, into one great community, will probably be exhibited.*

* In all this I have shewn myself disposed to look at the statements and reasonings of the advocates for an unlimited progression of the human race in knowledge, civilization, domestic comfort, and social improvement, under the most favourable aspect possible. Privately however, the future, regarded even in a mere secular point of view, does not present itself to my mind solely *sous couleur de rose*. Depths and forms of evil hitherto unknown, perhaps now even unsuspected, may be lurking under this fair prospect of human advance and prosperity. Solomon says, *Of making many books there is no end; and much study (reading, margin,) is a weariness of the flesh*. Eccles. xii. 12. Is there not contained in these words a suggestion that a state of highly advanced knowledge and civilization is not, therefore, a state of unmixed felicity? May it not be that society is now merely throwing off one form of evil, namely that of ignorance, to exchange it for another form of evil, namely that of secular and fleshly knowledge? May not, on the part of the working classes of society especially, such increased envy, such a dissatisfaction with their own condition, and disposition to pull down all who are above them to their own level, be the result of this so much vaunted progress in knowledge, as to shew that even the ignorance of preceding times, bad as ignorance in itself is, was not without its attendant and counterbalancing advantages? If I am not mistaken, the beginnings of the exhibition of such feelings are even at the present moment visible. And the history of the French Revolution shews to what lengths they may be carried. Far be it from me to assert that "ignorance," positively considered, "is" or can be "bliss." Negatively, however, it is far from impossible that, in a future stage of society, it may be discovered to have been so. Evils unknown are at all events evils unfelt and undeplord. The mind does not brood over them, and extract from them subject-matter for discontent and hatred. Besides, even if wrong in my anticipations, sullen discontent with their condition on the part of the operative portion of mankind is not the only evil,—for numerous and grievous these evils may be,—which is destined to spring out of that advance of society in knowledge and civilization upon which the hearts of our literary maniacs and would-be-philanthropists are so decidedly set.

Notwithstanding these fears, however, I am prepared and willing, I repeat, to give those who delight themselves in the prospect of the high state of comfort and civilization which advancing knowledge will bring along with it the full benefit of their anticipations. Let it be admitted, as I have done in the text,—just now, at least, I am not going to question the theory,—that mankind, secularly considered, shall at a future period of this present world be far

Amidst such advantages, it follows of necessity that the fleshly mind of man will be puffed up. Contemplating the complete change in human affairs, and in the aspect of human society, to which, in his estimation, literature and science, commerce and human enterprise shall have given birth, he will be apt, not only to think, but with the proud monarch of old to give utterance to the sentiment, *Is not this great Babylon which I have built?* Dan. iv. 30.

Religion, I mean the religion of fleshly mind, will not, in the mean while, be inactive. Missionary Societies and Bible Societies will continue their operations abroad; while the survivors of the various sects and parties into which Christendom now is divided, and others which have not yet sprung into existence, will be making corresponding efforts at home. The cause of religion will evidently be on the advance. Sometimes by a junction of different sects; sometimes by each sedulously and strenuously pursuing its own separate path.

Two distinct sets of phenomena will characterise these various sects, whatever they may be. The older and larger bodies will find themselves under a kind of moral necessity to persevere in maintaining existing dogmas and institutions.

more enlightened, and consequently far more comfortable, than we now behold them to be—even in this supposed state of things I witness merely the growth of opportunity for the display, and of the actual display, of the principle of enmity to God.

Since writing the above I have perused with much care and attention Mr. Ralph Waldo Emerson's Essays. Able and original they unquestionably are, reminding one continually of the writings of Thomas Carlyle, to whose school, if I am not mistaken, the author belongs. Although far from being satisfied with his statements, (which I cannot complain of as being obscure to me, for I fully understand them,) I am so struck with the following passage, which occurs in his Essay on "Self-Reliance," that I must gratify myself, and I hope my readers also, by quoting it. "Society never advances. It recedes as fast on one side as it gains on the other. Its progress is only apparent like the workers of a treadmill. It undergoes continual changes: it is barbarous, it is civilised, it is christianised, it is rich, it is scientific; but this change is not amelioration. For every thing that is given something is taken away."—*Essays*, London edition, 1841, p. 85.

And this, because for them to recede one iota from what has been established, would be to compromise that apparent infallibility which is the grand principle of their being and influence; and thereby to involve themselves in ruin. Smaller sects, on the other hand, may,—and yet this must be done with great caution,—admit of some variations and modifications in their respective theories and practices. But whether a firm stand on what is already established, or a readiness to make concessions and admit of modifications, be the principle acted on by religious sects, in both cases mere fleshly considerations, however disguised by the profession of higher motives, will determine the result.—By the way, I may observe that it is among the very small bodies of professors of religion, especially among those which are likely at some future period to start into existence, that the rage for innovation may be expected most decidedly to manifest itself. Probably, indeed, having caught the spirit of the age,—which assumes man's capability of making progress by his own efforts, in every department of mind as well as matter, as its leading characteristic,—upon the principle of the admissibility of constant change some such bodies will in future be constructed.

Established churches will, it is extremely probable, and that at no very distant period too, be obliged to descend from their present lofty position, and occupy the same ground on which voluntary religious associations now stand. But whatever may be in this, one thing may be predicted, without any possibility of being mistaken in the actual result, that all religious bodies (with the exception of some few, here and there, now and then, of no account, small in number, and not likely from the heavenly nature of the doctrines which they profess to be of long earthly continuance,) will be found united and co-operating in two respects: first, in maintaining the existence of external churches of Christ, or, of the church of Christ in an external form upon earth; and,

secondly,—whatever in certain parts of their respective formularies or systems they may say respecting the efficacy of Christ's atoning blood, and the freeness of the gift of life everlasting,—in making the salvation of each individual and his enjoyment of heavenly blessings to depend on some work or works, internal or external, or both, which it is incumbent on him to perform, and without the performance of which, on his part, the finished (?) work of Jesus can be of no avail to him.*

Great will be the exultation of all such religious bodies when contemplating the advance, the onward march of their respective creeds. Perhaps, even where jealousy and rivalry do not interfere, they may even take delight in what they are pleased to consider and denominate their common christianity. And a feeling akin to that of the statesman and the philosopher, when looking at the progress of mankind under the influence of improved political institutions and the humanizing tendencies of letters and science—a feeling of self-gratulation upon what this sect, or that sect, or all sects taken together have been able to do, thinly disguised under a veil of thanksgiving to God, for what they affect to pay him the compliment of having accomplished—I say a feeling of this kind will be common to the minds, and will from time to time make itself apparent in the language of popular and fleshly religionists. And no wonder. For if the spread of priestly and clerical influence over the minds of men, manifested in the increasing numbers of human beings who volun-

* Even where it is not said so in so many words, the necessity of baptism, of obedience to the church,—that is, to the clergy,—and of many other things of the like sort, in order to salvation, will in every possible way be insinuated. To brand a man as a deist or atheist who does not believe that the word of God and the word of the clergy are necessarily and essentially one, as it has been had recourse to with serious temporal results to the poor parties concerned in time past, so it may be found to be a weapon of very formidable efficacy in time to come.

tarily subject themselves to their sway,—influenced in no small measure to do so by the withdrawal then of all that claim to domination over the conscience which is the grand characteristic of established churches now,—be a source of delight to the fleshly mind, this delight the ministers of religion are I think in a future age of the world destined largely to experience.

Religious bodies will, if I am not mistaken, be found more frequently uniting for a common purpose in future than they have heretofore done. The alienation produced by the establishment of favourite religious sects being removed, one grand source of jarrings and heartburnings will be at an end. Bodies claiming infallibility will of course continue to keep aloof from others. But this reason for distance can apply only to them. Probably, too, the various sects and parties will be more brought together, in consequence of a greater approximation to one another in what are considered the essentials of genuine piety taking place at a future period of the world, than has ever yet been visible.*

And as among religious bodies themselves, so between religious bodies on the one hand and literary and scientific associations and those entrusted with the powers of civil government on the other, it is not improbable that, as time rolls on, there may spring up a better understanding, and a more hearty and decided co-operation than have ever yet been witnessed. Although, as among the religious bodies them-

* I am a good deal struck, if not even amused, at movements towards the setting up of prayer meetings, and other matters of a similar kind, now in progress among the Unitarians of the United States of America. The extreme of *rationality* combined with the extreme of *fleshly piety*! Well, wonders will never cease. Going on in this way, who knows in what this methodistic tendency of rationalism may terminate. Perhaps at some future period of the world Unitarians themselves may be brought within the pale, and form a constituent portion of that great body of religious professors which arrogates to itself the name, style, and title of evangelical? Who will venture to say, notwithstanding present discouraging appearances, that this is impossible?

selves, so between them and the associations and statesmen spoken of, there exist naturally discord and variance,* yet as religious bodies can occasionally sink their differences and unite for some common purpose, so may religious and secular bodies be found perfectly capable of uniting and co-operating occasionally for the promotion of some great object, to the attainment of which their temporary coalition is deemed to be indispensable.

Have we no examples of such occasional unions of bodies naturally hostile, recorded in scripture? Certainly we have. On one occasion, Sadducees and Pharisees, Jewish sects which cordially detested each other, were found agreeing in one common aim, that of endeavouring to puzzle and perplex the Son of God. Matt. xxii. 15—40. On another occasion, Herod and Pontius Pilate, previously at variance, concurred in mocking and chastising, Luke xxiii. 8—16, and the Jewish Sanhedrim and the Roman Procurator, rivals in the exercise of authority and cherishing towards each other the most deadly hatred, concurred in condemning and crucifying the same glorious and divine personage. Matt. xxvi. 66; xxvii. 26. The philosophical and the fleshly religious sects, the civil and the ecclesiastical authorities, however decided the posture of antagonism in which under ordinary circumstances they stand to each other, and the feelings of mutual

* Upon the broad scriptural principle, that as it is characteristic of human individuals, so also of human bodies which are composed of individuals, to be *hateful, and hating one another*. Titus iii. 3. There is no principle of real unity in human nature. All union between man and man is merely external and apparent. Selfishness, which constitutes human nature, is a principle of repulsion. My selfishness repels that of another, just as his repels mine. No co operation even of an external kind can take place between man and man, except by means of a veil thrown over or the appearance of subduing this principle. Unless the object of opposition be the divine or generous nature; and then on the same side against it is enlisted without any disguise the selfishness or human nature of every child of Adam. Psalm iii. 1—4. Love, or the divine nature, is the only really uniting nature that exists or can exist.

antipathy by which they are actuated, can thus, it would appear, combine,—aye, can even heartily for the time unite,—to accomplish a common object; that object being the destruction of one conceived to be a common foe.*

To effectuate a similar common object, it strikes me that the various fleshly religious bodies among themselves, and that these religious bodies, with literary and scientific associations and men possessed of rank and authority, will be found, in a future age of the world, coalescing and co-operating. A common enemy is to be put down, and a union of otherwise conflicting interests is required for this purpose. But before prosecuting this part of my subject farther, a class of persons totally different from, rather thoroughly opposed to fleshly religionists and fleshly-minded men of all descriptions, fall to be brought prominently under the reader's notice; and some remarks fall to be made respecting their very peculiar character and history.

SECTION FOURTH.

HEAVENLY CHURCH OR SEED OF THE WOMAN. ITS COMPLETE ANTAGONISM TO EARTHLY CHURCHES AND EARTHLY MINDED INDIVIDUALS AS CONSTITUTING THE SEED OF THE SERPENT. ORIGIN OF THE HEAVENLY CHURCH. ITS GROWTH AS WELL IN POINT OF NUMBERS AS OF SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE AND ENJOYMENTS. REAL INCREASE, APPARENT DIMINUTION. ALWAYS SMALL AS COMPARED WITH WORLDLY MEN AND FLESHLY PROFESSORS OF RELIGION.

Immediately after the one transgression of the first man, the following prophecy was uttered by the Lord God, in the

* See Psalm ii. 1—4, and Acts iv. 23—30.

form of an address to the serpent:—*And I will put enmity between thee and the woman; and between thy seed and her seed: * it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*" Gen. iii. 15.

Like every other word of God, this of course takes full effect. It began to be realized in the case of Cain and Abel; it appeared on a somewhat larger scale during the subsistence of the antediluvian world, in the opposition maintained between the sons of men or descendants of Cain and the sons of God or descendants of Seth; it reappeared after the flood in the enmity displayed by the rest of the world towards faithful Abraham and the few with whom he was associated; it was carried on and continued in the resistance given to and the sufferings inflicted on God's chosen and favourite people by Egyptians, Canaanites, Philistines, Syrians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Greeks, and Romans; it was manifested by the Jews themselves, when they crucified the Lord Jesus, rejected his gospel, and persecuted his disciples; it has come out in former periods of this present æra, and it comes out now, in the contempt poured on and the sufferings of various kinds for conscience sake endured by all who profess to see salvation and life everlasting freely bestowed, and therefore bestowed on themselves, through Christ crucified and glorified; and to the end of time it will continue manifesting itself, with constantly increasing intensity, in the shape of opposition on the part of *a world that lieth in wickedness*,

* Christ unquestionably; but not Christ solely. As Adam stands for one class of intelligent beings, that is beings possessed of human nature; so does Christ stand for another class of intelligent beings, that is beings possessed of the divine nature. 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22. No doubt the beings who are one with Adam, and the beings who are one with Christ, are the same beings, viewed first in a lower and afterwards in a higher state of existence; 1 Cor. xv. 49; still, viewed as one with Adam, they stand opposed to what they are viewed as one with Christ: just as Adam, although involved in Christ, as the creature is contained in the Creator, nevertheless has the necessary aspect of being Christ's enemy.

both irreligious and religious, to the few by whom *the truth as it is in Jesus* has been known, the love of God possessed, and the influence of the Holy and Heavenly Spirit experienced.

In every case, by whatever name the seed of the woman,—the small minority of which we have been speaking,—may have been called, whether pardoned, or reconciled, or saved ones; and to whatever extent, whether inferior or superior, their divine privileges may have reached; the feelings and procedure of the world towards them have been invariably the same. Modified, no doubt, by circumstances. Sometimes exhibited in the infliction of tortures and death; Heb. xi. 35—38; sometimes obliged to confine itself to the cherishing of secret malignity of disposition. John vii. 30, Acts ix. 23—25. Always, however, has the enmity of the world to the church existed. The gulph between the two parties has been too wide to permit the possibility of reconciliation while the respective natures of God and man continue. And the large and dominant party of the world, although often restrained by circumstances from the open and undisguised exhibition of its hostility to the small and oppressed party of God, has always been prepared to exhibit it, and has always seized with avidity on every suitable opportunity of doing so.

And this antagonism is mutual. Opposed is the party of God to the party of man, as decidedly as is the latter to the former. Such was the import of the prophecy just alluded to; and if fulfilled at all, it behoved to be fulfilled entirely. The enmity was to be on the part of the seed of the woman to the seed of the serpent, as well as on the part of the seed of the serpent to the seed of the woman; and if the serpent, in prosecution of his enmity, was to bruise the heel of the seed of the woman, this was to be retorted with more than interest by the seed of the woman bruising the serpent's head. Such, of necessity, has been matter of fact. Man, in evincing

himself opposed to God's friends, evincing himself thereby opposed to God himself with whom they are one, and who *regards them as the apple of his eye*, draws forth God's opposition to himself in return. And as God's friends have more or less of God's mind, (without which they could not belong to him, Rom. viii. 9,) if the world oppose them, they, like their divine Head, shew themselves opposed to the world. This state of mutual conflict began in Eden. It still continues. But, however long protracted, it can only have one issue. God's party may appear to the eye of sense to succumb;* but it has in it the principle of ultimate and complete triumph.† Its heel, although severely bruised by the severe temporal injuries which it sustains, always remains placed on the head of the world's party; and this until, as one with its glorified Redeemer, it ultimately succeed in bruising, crushing, and destroying it for ever.

We should commit a great mistake, however, were we, on account of a mutual antagonism subsisting between the world and the church, to suppose any resemblance between the nature of the antagonism of the one and the other. So far from there being any such resemblance, enmity, as existing in the minds of the world's party to the party of God, actually stands opposed to what enmity is, as it exists in the minds of God's party to the party of the world. There is antagonism in the very principle of mutual antagonism itself. In the party of the world, it appears in the form of hatred to the party of God; in the party of God, it appears in the form of love to the party of the world: the mutual antagonism actually consisting in the opposition of hatred to love, being met by the opposition of love to hatred. Matt. v.

* As, for instance, in the death of Christ, in the death of Stephen, &c.

† As, for instance, in the resurrection of Christ, in which he triumphs over all his and our enemies; in the spread of the gospel throughout the world, which followed the martyrdom of Stephen and the dispersing of the disciples, &c.

38—48; Rom. xii. 20, 21. And yet, this love cherished by God's party to their antagonists, is covered and concealed from the minds of the party of the world, by the aspect of hatred which it presents to mere fleshly intellect: an aspect of hatred, by the way, which is the result of the hatred cherished by man himself towards God. For he cannot help viewing God's feelings towards him, in the light of his own feelings towards God. God loves man, but God, in his treatment of man's nature, does not appear to man to do so. Man appears opposing God; Gen. iii. 1—6; God immediately appears opposing man. Ibid. 17—19. Man's nature appearing more and more opposed to God, God appears more and more standing in an attitude of hostility to man's nature. Gen. vi. throughout. 1 Thess. ii. 14—16. Until at last, the enmity of man's nature to God having reached its acmé, exhibiting itself in the highest and most complete form of opposition to him, God's enmity to man's nature reaches its acmé likewise, exhibiting itself in the highest and most complete form of opposition to it. He then bruises the serpent's head. That is, he then completely and for ever destroys the serpent's, or human nature. Agreeable to this, in as far as they possess (rather, are *possessed by*)* the mind of God, are the sentiments and is the procedure of God's party, or the woman's seed, towards the world. The first opposition of man's nature to them, is attended with a display of their opposition to man's nature. In proportion as man's nature opposes them, in the same proportion does their opposition to man's nature come out and make its appearance. Until the highest exhibition of man's enmity to them is met, counteracted, and overcome by the highest exhibition of their enmity to the nature of man. With their divine Head they then concur and rejoice in the ultimate and everlasting

* Gal. iv. 9, 1 Peter i. 5.

destruction of a nature from which such hateful effects and consequences have emanated. Here, then, to the eye of sense, and to the mind of flesh, all is hatred to man, on the part of God and his church,—continuous and progressive hatred,—from its origin till its consummation. And well justified does man appear to himself to be,* in resisting such hate, with strenuous and embittered hate on his own part. Love to man, however,—intense, overwhelming, everlasting love,—is what dictates all the opposition given to human nature by God and his people. What appears to man to be hate is actually love, in opposition to his own hateful nature, working out its own divine and glorious purposes. It is what is good, opposing what is evil ; and this for the advantage of those who are the temporary slaves of evil themselves. It is God *heaping coals of fire upon the heads of his enemies* ; that thereby *overcoming evil with good*, he may change their nature of enmity into the nature of love. Rom. xii. 20, 21. It is thus God, through the medium of a steady, continued, and increasing opposition, and of an ultimately destructive process, manifesting his goodness in the conferring of the highest, even everlasting benefits, upon beings who by nature are and must be his deadly and uncompromising foes. Man's nature, carrying out its enmity to God and God's people to the greatest possible extent, encounters the enmity of God and of God's people carried out to the greatest possible extent in return ; and is, by means of the victorious nature of divine enmity, 1 John v. 4, totally and everlastingly consumed. Sinners are thereby cut off from the earth, and the wicked are no more. Psalm civ. 35. But the consuming is in subserviency to their new creation. Rather, it is in their being new-created that they are consumed. It is in putting on them the incorruptible and the immortal nature, that the

* Not considering that in all cases he himself is the aggressor.

corruptible and the mortal nature is in them swallowed up for ever. 1 Cor. xv. 54; 2 Cor. v. 4. At Mount Horeb, the bush burned, but it was not consumed. Exod. iii. 2. So is it here. Man burns, but man himself is not consumed. On the cross, Jesus, the second Adam, appeared as the great antitypical burnt-sacrifice,* and from the grave he rose, with human nature in himself consumed; and yet man himself, in him thus raised, appeared not consumed, but clothed upon with incorruption and immortality. So now in his church. So ultimately in all. Jesus destroys in his own atoning sacrifice man's nature, soul and body; and yet, in his own personal resurrection he new creates man himself, thenceforward endowed with spirit and spiritual body. So also, destroying in himself the human nature of every man, he has paved the way for investing in himself every man, in his own order, anew and for ever, with the divine nature. 1 Cor. xv. 45, Phil. iii. 21, 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22, Rom. vi. 3—11. Thus appears love, the antagonist of hatred, in its highest form and fullest exercise on the part of the divine Head and his members. Their enmity to the fleshly nature of man appears in their resisting it at every step, overwhelming it with confusion, and finally destroying it; and yet this enmity of theirs, being merely a cover thrown over the love which they bear towards their enemies themselves,—their enmity, indeed, being neither more nor less than the opposition cherished by love to hatred,—in bruising the head or bringing to an end the very existence of the human nature of their antagonists, they do so by swallowing up human nature in the divine nature, and thereby conferring upon them the infinitely and unspeakably glorious privilege of life everlasting. Thus has love, as a destructive through being a new-creative principle, its perfect work. And mutual an-

* See Leviticus, i. throughout, &c. &c.

tagonism, although subsisting between the world and the church, is not, it thus appears, on both sides the same; being on the part of the world to the church, that of hatred — on the part of the church to the world, that of love.

This seed of the woman opposed to the seed of the serpent, as it always has been, so to the end of the world it will continue to be, comparatively speaking, a small body. A *little flock*, Luke xii. 32, and a *mere remnant*, Isaiah i. 9, Rom. ix. 27, are scriptural epithets not more strikingly than truthfully applied to them. They appear as proofs of what God is capable of accomplishing, notwithstanding the previous and continued opposition of this world to his revealed character; and they are the honoured instruments of his ulterior gracious procedure towards the human family. Matt. v. 14, John xvii. 21, 23. For these purposes a small number suffices, and for these purposes, therefore, a small number is employed.*

Comparatively small, however, as the number of saved ones has been, is, and ever will be, their number is nevertheless continually on the increase. It was at its *minimum* point† in all probability, immediately after the apostolic period, when the internal and saved state of the church commenced; and when, owing to its previously external character, there were but few prepared to understand the new state upon which it had entered, and thereby to enjoy *the rest* or *sabbatism* which up to that time had *remained for the people of God*. Heb. iv. 9. As time rolled on, however, quietly and unobtrusively did the members of this

* This subject is treated of at some length in the seventh chapter of my "Assurance of Faith," vol. 2d.

† I am, it will be observed, here confining the reader's attention and my own to what has occurred since the destruction of Jerusalem. That the true church has in every age consisted of saved ones, although the fact of this being the case has only been made manifest since the destruction of Jerusalem, will be shewn in the conclusion. At present I am dealing only with the apparent.

heavenly church go on increasing. Theirs was not the glare of secular pomp, or the interest which attaches to popular commotions. Belonging to a *kingdom* which is *not of this world*, amidst the bustle of mere human affairs, and those stirring changes of sects and parties which are chronicled by the historian, they were of necessity overlooked. By man, I mean; not by God. For they have all along been the salt of the earth; the precious in his sight; the excellent ones for whose sake the world is maintained in existence.—The Reformation, and its consequences, brought along with it a large accession to their numbers. Not that all, or even a majority of the professedly reformed, belonged to the seed of the woman. Not, certainly, that all the prominent and noisy portion of them did so. But that, at the period of which I now speak, there was a great increase of that same description of quiet and obscure ones, whose existence the world knows nothing of, and of whose sentiments it makes no account. Of such *the world is not worthy*, Heb. xi. 38; and the world shews this to be the case, by neglecting, or when by any accident they are brought under its notice, by persecuting them.—Vastly more numerous is this body of saved ones now than it ever was in any preceding age. Nor has it yet reached its *maximum*. As time advances, the number of its members will increase, receiving constant augmentations from rival sects, from diverse climes, and not improbably from countries into which scarcely yet has the light of christianity penetrated. Towards the close of this present world, persons taught from above will appear in a far larger proportion than at any previous period. And the termination of this present system of things will find them existing, not only in greater numbers than formerly, but constituting a very large body indeed.

Nor does this advance of the true and heavenly church of Christ, during the third and present æra, consist in an aug-

mentation in point of numbers merely. Increase of divine knowledge, and increase of divine love, on the part of these saved ones, characterise every step of their progress. The few who are the objects of God's special favour, on the whole, have, at this present moment, their understandings more enlightened, and their hearts more impressed by divine and heavenly principle, than was ever previously experienced. And to this advance in light and love, no limits, except such a communication of the one and the other as shall exhaust the mind of God declared in the scriptures, and as shall render the church unable to receive more while in her earthly state, are capable of being put. To this issue matters are tending. Having begun in a small degree to do so, not in a miraculous way, but according to their own nature, after the destruction of Jerusalem—having done so increasingly at subsequent periods, especially at that of the Reformation,—God is now gradually, to his own people, opening up in a still higher degree the sacred oracles. He is satisfying his church thereby that he has vastly more to bring out of the scriptures, and thus vastly more divine knowledge to communicate, than godly men in preceding ages have had imparted to them. The result is most obvious. Human authority in matters of religion is less and less operating on the minds of God's chosen people. Not by their adoption of Rationalist and Socinian principles, but by the very opposite—by the increasing influence of heavenly and divine principles. Those taught from above are, in fact, from the true meaning of scripture being thus gradually and increasingly unfolded to them by its divine Author, beginning to discover and enjoy more and more the internal nature of vital christianity. In consequence of this, they are being made increasingly aware of the falsehood and antichristian character of external forms of religion and external churches; of the opposition to the heavenly and spiritual nature of Messiah's kingdom, which

is implied in lordly bishops and clergymen of all sorts and denominations professing to be invested with apostolic authority; and of any bodies of men, large or small, popular or unpopular, professing to enjoy the powers and privileges, because constituted after the model, of the apostolic churches.* Every thing that is external connected with the church of Christ, except the bare fact of its living members at any and every period of this present world being still in flesh, they are more and more clearly perceiving, passed away at the æra of Jerusalem's destruction. The church of Christ itself they are in the same gradually progressive way perceiving is solely and thoroughly internal. Rev. xiv. 1—5. The church of Christ they are beginning to see more and more clearly has superseded, and is not therefore a continuation of the Jewish church, much less of any of its humanly-devised imitations: the church of Christ they are discovering is heavenly, not earthly; the antitype of the type which was set up at Mount Sinai; the substance of

* The Glassite and Sandemanian churches first broke in upon the old jogtrot system. But they merely opposed one error by means of another. As bishops and clergy formerly had claimed for themselves apostolic powers, and thereby had opposed the truth, the followers of Glass and Sandeman claimed the rank and privilege of being apostolically constituted churches for their voluntary associations,—insisting on unity of mind and the power of exercising discipline as essential to and as belonging to them; not understanding that these belonged only to the miraculous state of things which had long since passed away: the parties in question thereby,—after a different fashion from the Popish church and its Protestant spawn, but still as decidedly,—opposing the truth. Among the Bereans, although still labouring under the blunder of external churchship, I see some kind of approximation to the truth in this matter. But the nearest approach has been made by those called the Plymouth Brethren. The works of Mr. Beverley, on the “Heresy of a Human Priesthood,” and on the “Christian Ministry,” with all their mistakes, and they are not a few, indicate increasing light on a long mistaken subject, and have rendered good service to the cause of truth. Alas! how much is it to be regretted that, with distinct views on many points, so much of the leaven of conditional notions, of doubts and fears as to their personal interest in Christ, and of limited salvation,—besides attention to external ordinances, as if Christ's church were external,—should still be found prevailing among the Plymouth Brethren and their friends.

that shadowy state of things, that shadowy dispensation, Heb. ix. throughout, and x. 1—22, which, as having originally projected from itself, it has reabsorbed into itself.* Hence, on the part of God's people, a gradual *decrease* of *external* and *apparent*, with a gradual *increase* of *internal* and *real* unity. Real, that is divine love, likewise, is in their hearts on the increase. Not that mere semblance of unity and love, which tends to bring bodies of men together externally, either as established churches, or as dissenting communities, or as Bible and missionary associations, for the prosecution of some common but secular object; but a real unity and love, flowing from heavenly principles and leading to heavenly results. A real unity and love, as partakers of which they are necessarily members of the true and heavenly church of God. While Socinianised characters are feeling or are affecting to feel a strong desire to promote the temporal comforts and well-being of their fellow-men, and while fleshly pietists are courting, as the one thing needful, external union among bodies falsely arrogating to themselves the rank and dignity of being churches of Christ, the few to whom it has been given to know the truth of salvation as presently, personally, and unconditionally bestowed through Christ Jesus, and in whose hearts consequently the love of God has been shed abroad, are actually exhibiting more and more aversion to human nature in all its effects and manifestations, whether in themselves or in others, Luke xiv. 26, 27; 1 John ii. 15, and an increasing disposition to avoid entangling religious associations with their fellow-men. 2 Cor. vi. 15—18, Rev. xviii. 4. Seeing more and more clearly that human nature is essentially opposed to God, Rom. viii. 7, Gal. v. 17, and that human societies of a religious nature, especially if invested

* With reference to Christ and his church,

Coming events cast their shadows before,

in the person of Adam and the earthly church of Israel. Rom. v. 14, Heb. ix. throughout.

with any kind of authority, tend to impose restraints (in so far as man can do so,) on the progress of divine illumination and influence, they are found more and more setting themselves in opposition to the one, and eschewing the other. This procedure on the part of the church, the true and heavenly church, will become still more decidedly observable towards the close of time. With an amazingly increased *internal* unity, it is questionable with me if at the end of the world,—at all events among the most enlightened and heavenly-minded,—there will be any *external* unity whatever.* The most spiritual will then and thus be realizing the utmost fulness of that internal, vital, and heavenly union of the members of the church while on earth, with the members of the church glorified, which it is possible for God through the scriptures to communicate, and for beings clothed with flesh and blood to enjoy. In this internal and spiritual union, so incompatible with that which is external and fleshly, they will be of necessity assuming an attitude of most decided hostility to the clergy, to earthly churches, and to that strong propensity of human nature which leads to external associations. The result we shall see afterwards.

* At present certainly external associations of a religious kind (not upon the footing of their being christian churches, but of their containing members of the only christian church, which is above,—and not as generally constituted, but as thrown open to all who know and love the Lord Jesus, and divested of everything that has the appearance of any man or set of men lording it over the consciences of others,) have their use. A use arising from the comparatively low and feeble state of divine knowledge around us, and as a rallying point to the better informed. Making every allowance however, such associations, from the very fact of their being external, are exceedingly liable to abuse: the operation of human reason being apt to creep in, and thereby stealthily to try to usurp the place which is due to divine revelation; and men, limited in their own views of divine truth, being apt to try to impose their own limited views upon others. Hence I think, as God's people become more imbued with heavenly wisdom, and thus understand more completely the nature, genius, and spirit of vital Christianity, they will have less recourse to, as they will have less occasion for, the devices of a wisdom that is but human and earthly. James iii. 15—18.

Along with what has just been stated, in order to guard against all misapprehensions of my meaning, let the two following considerations always be taken :—

1. That at the utmost, or when the church of the living God is increased to the largest size in which it will ever exist while in flesh, even then its members will bear a small, I had almost said an infinitesimal proportion to the party of the world. And if small then, how much smaller at previous periods of its history ! I am willing to admit, as I have admitted, that at the end of time the proportion of saved ones will be much greater than they ever previously were ; but what I am now insisting on is, that to whatever degree they may then be increased, they will, as compared with the world, be few after all. Population will probably have so wonderfully increased during the interim, as to throw the present population of the globe, crowded although in many places it be, completely into the shade. This circumstance may contribute to keep the increasing numbers of the church low, in proportion to the increased numbers of the mere men of the world. In judging of the present subject, however, we require not to take this into account. The only principle of the comparative fewness of the number of the saved to which we need pay any attention is, the purpose which God from everlasting purposed in himself, as that is declared in his word, and has been evinced in his procedure in every age. As only eight souls were preserved from the deluge in Noah's ark, and as only righteous Lot and his family escaped from the conflagration of Sodom and Gomorrah, so now, as it has been in every past and shall be in every future period of this world, according to God's sovereign purpose, only a " little flock," comparatively speaking,* inherit the privileges, and

* I use this qualifying phrase because I cannot forget the case of Elijah, 1 Kings xix. 10—18, and the lesson founded upon it by the apostle Paul, Romans xi. 2—5.

contribute *intentionally** towards forwarding the objects of his kingdom.

2. That the members of the church of God, although as time rolls on really on the increase, will have the appearance to the world of being gradually and constantly diminishing. This originates in the two following facts: first, in that of the church and the world having been to the eye of sense among the Jews identified, and of the two never having been, since the overturn of the Old Testament dispensation, even in the apprehensions of those who have some knowledge of the truth, thoroughly separated; and secondly, in the tendency of the advancing operation of divine knowledge and love,—the grand effects of the putting forth of the power of Christ's resurrection,—to bring about a growing separation of the church and the world from each other.

Except by a very few indeed, the church of God, and external bodies of individuals professing to constitute churches of God, are to all practical purposes confounded.† A few remarks will, I hope, suffice to clear up this matter. Numbers have passed, and do still pass, for members of the church of God, who belong not to that highly privileged and glorious body, and who have no right consequently to assume its name, character, and dignity. The existence of what are called churches of Christ, that is, of bodies of human beings externally and voluntarily associated together, which claim the rank and profess to occupy the place of the apostolic churches, and the circumstance of these bodies having hitherto drawn into the vortex of their delusions, and obtained the approba-

* All persons and things forward unintentionally God's purposes; the church does so intentionally.

† Owing to the circumstance of all Abraham's fleshly descendants without exception having constituted the Old Testament church; and to the tendency of fleshly mind, as not having experienced the power of Christ's resurrection, and as consequently not understanding the spiritual state of things which is its result, to suppose that in New Testament times the external church is one with the internal, the fleshly with the spiritual, the earthly with the heavenly.

tion and support of the great majority of those who are in reality children of God, favour the mixture, rather cause the identification of two classes, the church of God and societies of mere human origin calling themselves churches of God—two classes whose principles and internal characters stand diametrically and essentially opposed the one to the other. While fleshly systems of religion, combined with vague and undigested notions as to the real points in dispute between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, contribute still farther to the same result. Hence to increase the number of such external bodies, and to swell their size by incessant additions of proselytes, is, in the apprehension of ordinary religionists (and some of them truly pious too), to advance the cause and interests of Christ's spiritual kingdom: all plans adopted, and all efforts put forth by them, having this external increase of numbers for one of their favourite objects; and "Union, increased union," among such external bodies being clamoured for and insisted on, as if it were synonymous with spiritual and Christian union, and the sole means of growing religious prosperity.* Now it so happens that genuine Chris-

* A volume of discourses,—sadly at variance among themselves, by the way,—having it for their object to shew the necessity and nature of this union, has recently issued from the press in Scotland. It is entitled, "ESSAYS ON CHRISTIAN UNION," pp. xvi. 522, and is published by Hamilton, Adams, and Co., London; and David Robertson, Glasgow.

A poet whose castigations of Bible and missionary societies are most awful, and whom none of the reverend authors of the Essays just alluded to would choose exactly to acknowledge as a brother and ally, happens as to this point of the desirableness of external union to be completely at one with them. Witness the following spirited lines:—

" Oh! for that day, whenever it shall beam,
Which gives us back the coat without a seam;
When, from all quarters of this earth combined,
One universal church shall knit mankind.
To build their heavenly Salem then shall rise,
With one consent, the great, and good, and wise:
All sects united in a common band,
Join faith with faith, and mingle hand with hand;
Together lift the sacrifice of prayer,
And the slain Lamb's eternal supper share."

Religio Clerici, Epistle II. London, 1821.

tianity is in the teeth of all this. Being a principle which is altogether heavenly—a principle which is connected with Jesus glorified, and which consists in the exertion of his resurrection and new-creating power—its tendency is not to confirm but to dissipate and destroy earthly notions concerning the church of God. Its tendency is to make known that church as a body which is entirely internal, spiritual, and heavenly—as essentially and necessarily opposed to all bodies which, although claiming its name and privileges, are external, carnal, and earthly; and thereby the inconsistency and incongruity of persons who have full communion with it, having any communion with bodies whose attributes and character imply hostility to it. Its tendency is to shew that all earthly and external churches are the result of attempts on the part of men to build again that accursed Jericho of Judaism,* which God hath destroyed;† that they all stand opposed to true and vital godliness; and that they cannot, therefore, be associated with or countenanced by those who have experienced the resurrection power of Jesus, except at great personal risk and inconvenience.‡ Unfortunately,

* Joshua vi. 26.

† 1 Thess. ii. 14—16, 2 Thess. i. 7—9, Heb. x. 27, xii. 27, Matt. xxv. 46. Little think our fleshly professors of millennial theories that the punishment of the earthly church of Moses is eternal, consisting in its eternal deprivation of its former church capacity, and its eternal exclusion from the heavenly kingdom; Psalm lxxxii. 6; Rev. xii. 7—9; and that could their wishes for its restoration be accomplished, this would be at the expense of the truth of God's word. Heb. xii. 29. *All Israel shall be saved*, Rom. xi. 26, in so far as all who are descendants of Abraham and Israel through Jesus Christ shall be so; Gal. iii. 29; Romans ii. 28, 29; and *all Israel shall be saved*, in so far as all Jews being descendants of Adam, in Jesus as spiritual Adam, and as having in that capacity *mercy upon all*, Rom. xi. 32, 1 Cor. xv. 22, there is an ultimate new creation of them, as well as of all others besides. Rev. xxi. 5.

‡ Not of rejection from the kingdom, for God having loved them as his own *loves them to the end*: John xiii. 1; Rom. viii. 38, 39; xi. 29; Heb. xii. 27, 28: but of those various and severe judgments which are the invariable and the necessary consequences of evil doing on the part of God's people. Psalm lxxxix. 30—34.

however, with such external bodies, miscalled churches of Christ, in spite and defiance of divine warnings, the majority of those upon whom the knowledge of the gospel has been conferred are still to be found connected. Thus acting, need we wonder at the extent of their ignorance—at their limited and inconsistent views of divine truth—at their unfruitfulness, their cunning, covetous, and ambitious practices, their worldly temper and spirit? They have not come out of Babylon; and therefore, as partakers of her sins, they are judicially, because deservedly, made *to receive of her plagues*. Rev. xviii. 4.

But matters, even during the currency of time, are not destined always thus to continue. Already some are kept from the wide-spread contagion. Members of the heavenly church, they are preserved from forming entangling alliances with earthly ones; and as God's own teaching of his people progresses, they will be separated more and more from such external bodies. Not to form and enter into other external religious associations themselves,—a piece of folly which, could they become chargeable with it, would be to homologate the procedure and tread in the footsteps of those whom they condemn,—but to avoid forming, and stand completely aloof from all churches of mere human origin. They will not become members of this or of that external body calling itself a church of Christ; but, remaining unconnected with and opposed to all such earthly associations, they will make it manifest that they know and are capable of acting in their true character of members of the one exclusive and heavenly church of the living God. Rev. xxi. 27.

This separation of the members of Christ's real church from external and earthly associations falsely calling themselves by his name, as it has been, so will it continue to be, the effect of the gradually increasing manifestation of the power of his resurrection. In rising himself from the dead,

and ascending to his Father's right hand, Jesus became, or rather shewed himself to be the heavenly one; and so the genuine and native result of the putting forth of his resurrection power is, in proportion to the degree in which it is exerted, to render his church heavenly like himself. Eph. i. 17—23, Phil. iii. 10—14. Now one grand distinguishing feature of this third and present æra of the world is the gradually increasing exertion by Christ, in the case of the members of the church, of his resurrection power. Growing it is and will be. And as the putting forth of this power grows, so will the members of the heavenly church grow in point of numbers, as well as of knowledge and love: the process of growth going on until it shall be as complete as is possible in connexion with beings whose abode is in flesh; and the members of the church having then become the most numerous, as well as their spiritual attainments being the most exalted which short of a higher state of existence they can be.

To the mere mind of flesh, however, the progressive operation of Christ's resurrection power, in the case of his church, will convey an impression the very opposite of that of growth. For its necessary result will be to exhibit, with increasing clearness of manifestation, a view of the exceedingly small proportion which the true church of God has borne and bears to bodies which have long usurped, and which still persist in retaining its name. Outraged and revolted by such a discovery must be all the ideas, and conclusions, and aspirations of mere fleshly mind, on the subject of the church and the church's extension in the world. Accustomed as that mind is to regard the church of God as consisting of all, or at all events of the great majority of those who make an external profession of religion, and are connected with external churches; and to regard increase of the numbers of external professors as of necessity identical with a corresponding increase of God's true church; it is far from being prepared

for the visible rejection on God's part of the claims of the great bulk of such characters to belong to him, and for the consequent result of the true church, through this process of divine retrenchment, turning out, as compared with their estimate of its dimensions, to be a body exceedingly small. Nay, not only small, but as actually to appearance a body which is gradually and incessantly undergoing a process of diminution. For in exact proportion as, through the increasing exertion of divine and resurrection power, it is really increasing, and is by the spiritual eye seen to be so,—yet as such *increase* is attended with corresponding increase in the manifestation of the hollowness of mere human profession, it is in the same proportion, to the eye of sense, presenting the appearance of *decrease*. The fact is, that the spiritual and heavenly process involved in the growth of the exertion of Christ's resurrection and ascension power, which has in past ages been going on, and which shall continue to go on till the end of time, is a process of purification, and thereby of elimination. Rather, as being connected with the carrying out of a grand experiment made by God on man, it is a process in which the baselessness, falsehood, and fleshly nature of what is commonly styled a christian profession are made more and more to develop themselves. Every new exertion of Christ's resurrection power, in the further illumination of one or a few of the members of his church, is always at the expense of manifesting the hollowness of the external christianity of many who previously had borne his name, and professed to belong to him. Human knowledge *may be* power; divine knowledge *is* so. The gradually advancing illumination, and thereby the gradual advance in spiritual strength, of *the few* who are in reality the children of God, is always of necessity attended with the gradual manifestation of the ignorance and enmity, and thereby with the gradual throwing off and rejection of *the many*, who never had more than the appearance of being so.

One or more is enlightened by God's Spirit, through his word; but perhaps ten, or twenty, or a hundred, or even a larger number of persons who previously passed for regenerated ones and heirs of glory, and who were held in high repute as members of external churches, not having divine illumination conceded to them, immediately manifest the fleshliness of their principles and characters, by rejecting and condemning those very discoveries of himself which God hath seen meet in the case of others to impart.*

Such is the way in which matters have gone on, and will continue to go on. A few, a progressively more numerous few, will be the subjects of divine illumination through the word,—the degree of that illumination being itself progressive; but in exact proportion to this advance of the true church in point of numbers and light, will be the manifestation inversely of a still greater and constantly increasing number of professors of religion who have never known the truth, and of the awful extent of the darkness as to divine things under which they have been labouring. The more *the few* are increased, the more it thus appears is the number of *the many* shewn to be. And the more divine truth is made known to the few, the more is ignorance of it manifested, and the more is hatred to it drawn out on the part of the many. Real increase of numbers and light in the case of the church of God, under such circumstances, necessarily conveys

* The tendency of fleshly mind, assuming for a time the name, rank, and privileges of spiritual mind, to shew its real character when superior spiritual views are brought to bear upon it; or rather, the tendency of advancing spiritual views to irritate the great majority of fleshly religionists, and to induce them gradually to throw off the masque and abandon their previous profession; is beautifully although painfully exemplified in the sixth chapter of the Gospel according to John. As Jesus advances in the statement of his views and the development of his spiritual character, his hearers first *murmur*, verse 41; then declare his language respecting the necessity of *eating his flesh* and *drinking his blood* to be a *hard saying*, which none can bear; verse 60; and finally abandoning him to the society of his twelve apostles, thenceforward become his bitter enemies, verse 66.

to fleshly mind the idea of diminution—a fact which will be most striking towards the end of the world. God will continue more and more enlightening his church; and so wonderfully enlightening, I suspect, as to exhibit a gradually accelerated velocity in the increase of its members, and of their spiritual attainments, as time draws near its close. This, however, will take place at the expense of casting off, or rather of leaving behind at their original station of flesh, in the same rapidly increasing ratio, far greater numbers of human beings than those who are spiritually enlightened—namely, of all those earthly churches and individuals, who, by this process of increased illumination of the true church, as contrasted with their own increased and increasing resistance to it, will be made with increasing force of evidence to shew that, however much previously they might have had a *name to live*, they *were* all along in reality *dead*. Rev. iii. 1.

Larger and larger accessions, we thus discover, are continually being made to the true and heavenly church; and yet, as each step of advance in this respect is attended with the getting rid of a number of those who formerly professed to belong to Christ still larger than that of those who are manifested to be his disciples, the actual increase is to appearance actual and decided decrease. The heavenly church is by the augmented exertion of Christ's heavenly and resurrection power, being more and more separated from earthly churches; but as the members of the heavenly church are always comparatively few, and as the apparent greatness of their number at present arises from the confounding of churches which are external and false, with that church which alone is internal and true, it is evident that the gradual separation from fleshly professors which is consequent on God's gradually adding to the number and graces of his heavenly church, and causing it to act more in character, so far from swelling the size of this church, must, from the circumstance of fleshly religionists

having always constituted the great majority of professors, have the appearance of detracting from and diminishing it. A process of *real increase*, but *apparent diminution*, which shall reach its acmé at the end of time; when the largest number possible of members of the heavenly church shall have been brought to the knowledge of the truth, and when these individuals shall have been invested in the highest degree possible with the graces and privileges of vital and spiritual christianity. So complete will the separation of these heavenly ones from earthly churches then be—and so much larger than at any previous period, will the number of earthly professors, the hollowness of whose pretensions to the christian name shall, by the greatness of the resurrection power and illumination put forth in the case of their highly favoured antagonists, have been thoroughly exposed, then be—that, deprived entirely as the heavenly church will then find herself, in the view of all, of masses of those who were formerly regarded as her members, never at any period more than then will she appear to the eye of sense to be at a lower ebb, or to have reached a lower point of depression. The very period of the heavenly church's closing earthly scene, when she shall have actually attained to the highest dignity to which, and when she shall be encircled with the highest glory of which, while in this flesh and blood state she is capable—the very period when her numbers shall be *as the stars of heaven, and as the sand by the sea-shore innumerable*, and when her divine knowledge and love shall far surpass what is now conceivable by the most enlightened and spiritually-minded of her children—that very period will to the mere human intellect present her reduced to a state of the greatest meanness, and desolation, and desertion: Luke xviii. 8: her friends and adherents being to appearance so few, her resources so limited, her want of external union so great, her intellectual attainments so paltry, and her ignorance of, because absti-

nence from all the arts and expedients of worldly wisdom so complete, as to render her in the estimation of the mighty ones of the earth absolutely contemptible, and to induce them to think that the weight of a feather is all that requires to be laid on her, in order to crush her at once and for ever.*

* Perhaps a hint to popular and eloquent preachers of what are called evangelical sentiments,—if any such should chance to honour my work with their perusal,—may not be without its use, and may be taken kindly.—Never, my good friends, proclaim new and clearer and more scriptural views of divine truth than those which your hearers have been in the habit of listening to and receiving, even although they should be imparted to you. Popularity, you know, is your aim; perhaps also the acquisition of the means of living.—Nay, do not wince: make the admission honestly at once. Remember that I have been behind the scenes, and know all about the matter. Under such circumstances you cannot afford to irritate your hearers,—and irritation with its usual unpleasant consequences would be the necessary result of any attempt on your part, by bringing the word of God more purely and spiritually under their notice, to carry them really forward in the divine life. Keep them, therefore, as much as possible moving in a circle—going the same dull and perpetual round of practices, duties, and doctrines. Tell them what they already know and already relish. Make them fancy that they are learning, certainly; but all the while take care to be merely tossing to them views which they already have, and with the truth and perfect accuracy of which they are fully satisfied. Never by leading them to think they have been deceived offend their prejudices. Thus to act gratifies their self love. Some talent and considerable experience, no doubt, are required to manage all this well. There must be variety in the topics selected, as well as in the phraseology employed—there must be human eloquence—there must be frequent and powerful appeals to the feelings of your auditory—their itching ears must be tickled—their self-righteous notions must be adroitly managed and gratified—their pharisaical prejudices must be taken advantage of. Thus will matters go on smoothly. Priest and people will continue cherishing towards each other sentiments of mutual esteem and satisfaction. But no higher and more spiritual views of divine truth—no attempt at real teaching—if you value your influence, your peace of mind, and your pocket. Supposing you to proclaim what is really spiritual, God, it is true, may bless you; or rather his own truth. He may make you the honoured instrument of carrying forward in heavenly sentiments and vital godliness some of his dear children. But what of that? Think of the awful risque to yourself at which this good would be accomplished. For one whom you are made the means of enlightening, you irritate, you make your enemies, you lose perhaps ten, perhaps a hundred, of those who formerly hung on your lips and almost worshipped you. Even those to whom you are made the means of imparting higher views may not sufficiently appreciate the value of the blessing, and may by their coldness and apathy add to the feelings of vexation and disappointment of which the open opposition of former supporters is productive.

SECTION FIFTH.

THE ADVANCE *PARI PASSU* OF THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD.

ADVANCE OF THE CHURCH, HOWEVER, NOT DEPENDENT
ON THAT OF THE WORLD, AND IN A DIRECTION EXACTLY
OPPOSITE TO THAT OF THE WORLD.

Now we are prepared to retrace our steps by going back to the place where we left off at page 381, and to consider that advance of the world and external churches in a future age of which we were then speaking, in connexion with and as opposed to that advance of the true and internal church of the living God which has just been occupying our attention.

If our remarks have been attended to and understood, it must be obvious that we anticipate, in future ages of this present world, a great, a prodigious advance in many respects

No, no, my friends: no such foolish conduct as this should ever be yours. It is a capital maxim for you, and one to be constantly borne in mind and acted on by you, that "whatever is new in theology is therefore necessarily false." Never mind, although God's word should contradict this. Matt. xiii. 52. What have you or your hearers to do with that word, except in so far as it can be rendered a means of promoting your mutual self-satisfaction? Expediency, denominated usefulness, you know is the principle upon which you are acting; and therefore by a regard to expediency let your whole procedure be regulated.—And yet, dear friends, why address you in this strain? Why pretend to communicate to you instruction or warning as to this matter? You are far better adepts in the system of religious jugglery than I can expect to make you. You understand, and by your mode of dealing with them you shew that you understand, of what materials your respective congregations are composed, and how they require to be managed. To you therefore I have no information to convey; but it may be that some young, amiable, sanguine preacher is not exactly aware of the dangers attendant on a faithful and growing exposition of divine truth in its purity and spirituality. To him I say, Beware!

on the part both of mankind in general, and of the church in particular.

This advance will go on *pari passu*, as it were, on the part of both. As mankind progress in fleshly knowledge, fleshly civilization, fleshly comforts, fleshly morals, and fleshly religion on the one hand, so on the other hand will the true church of God be found progressing in the knowledge and love of her divine Redeemer. Mankind has lying before it an almost interminable career of progression in every thing which the mind of man can by its native energies discover and grasp, and which by its experience it can practically turn to account: a career upon which human beings have already entered, and in which it seems to be their destiny to run. The church of God, again, has the career of increasing scriptural discovery and of increasing divine love lying before it: the scriptures, the only medium of divine communications to man, being so constructed as to admit of their being gradually unfolded in all their richness and fulness of meaning to God's chosen people, and of divine love being thereby, with increasing copiousness, *shed abroad in their hearts*.

And at the close of time, matters on both sides will be ripe and complete. Mankind in general, whether the profane or the fleshlily religious, will then be as thoroughly enlightened and civilized, on mere human principles, as it is consistent with human nature and the existence of human society that they can be. The church, again, will then be as divinely enlightened, and as completely filled with divine love, as it is possible for beings clothed with flesh and blood to be.

So much for mere progression. Now, however, for a remarkable, and perhaps to many totally unexpected view of the picture.

In the first place, the progress of the church in future ages, although going on *pari passu* with that of the world, will not be in any respect whatever *dependent on that of*

the world. So far from being so, indeed, the advance of the church, as it is independent of, so will it be unconnected with that of the world altogether. It will be the result of causes not merely different from, but even essentially opposed to those which produce the advance of the world.—Mankind will make progress under the influence of the principles of human nature. Mental activity, ever growing curiosity, superior education, new opportunities for the exercise and development of intellect, and a thousand other causes of a similar description, will stimulate man's exertions, and crown them with success.—The church's advance, on the other hand, will be under the influence of the divine nature—will result from the gradually increasing operation of the glorified mind of Christ Jesus. Its members will be constantly learning new divine truths, and new relations of divine truths already known, in consequence of the Spirit's opening their understandings more and more to understand the scriptures; and under the influence of constantly increasing measures of heavenly and divine love, they will be constrained and enabled more and more to bring forth and exhibit the fruits and effects of righteousness. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. Their sole dependence for this advance of theirs is, be it observed, on divine and heavenly, not on human and earthly causes. Causes of the latter sort, indeed, so far from contributing to speed them onward in their heavenly career, will have exactly the opposite effect, by throwing every obstacle in the way of their getting forward. The fact being, that the more enlightened upon earthly principles men are, the more are heavenly principles by them neglected, despised, and even trampled under foot. Consequently, man's natural progression, now and in future, so far as its operation and influence extend, instead of promoting, tends to impede, by throwing stumbling-blocks in the way of the spiritual progression of the church. And impede that spiritual progression it would, were it depen-

dent in any respect on the progress of man, which, blessed be God, it is not.

By the way, I cannot quit this part of the subject, and go on to my next head, without observing, that although the church is in no respect whatever dependent for its advance upon that of the world, yet the world is in no small degree dependent for its advance upon that of the church: higher and clearer views of what is heavenly and divine, from time to time vouchsafed to the church, and by its members made public, throwing light continually on the state and circumstances of man, and contributing materially to promote his external comforts and welfare. The truth of this was evinced when christianity, even in its lowest and earthly form, triumphed over heathenism. It was still more decidedly manifested at the period of the Reformation, when Protestant views, however defective, were in certain countries, and to a certain extent, the cause of the rejection of Popery. So is it now. And so will it be in future ages. Advancing discoveries of the divine character and the divine administration made to the church, will, in proportion as they become known, contribute to perfect the science of government, that of morals, that of the human mind, and a variety of others. As under the silent and unobtrusive influence of christianity these have made progress in times past, so will they continue to do so more and more in time to come. While the world so far from acknowledging, indeed so far from being aware of the obligations thus imposed upon it, will as usual continue ascribing to its own native energies and unassisted powers of discovery, what is in reality the effect of light streaming into the human mind from above. The world thus depends for its progress on the church, not the church on the world. At the same time, in order to render my observations on this subject complete, and to obviate all cavils, I make the following admission: that, without the church being directly and

positively in any respect whatever dependent on the world, the world is nevertheless so far negatively of service to the church, that, besides supplying her with her increasing members, the discoveries in worldly matters made by mere worldly men eminent in the paths of literature and science, appear to be but so many stores laid up for the use of the church in an after age: not, certainly, to communicate divine light to the church, either originally or progressively, for that is accomplished by God himself through the scriptures alone; but as facts and principles, as more properly materials which the church is to explain and classify, and upon which she is to throw light, by means of and in proportion to that divine illumination which is more or less the common property and endowment of all her members.*

* I unhesitatingly reject Swedenborgianism, or the "New Jerusalem" system of religion, in most of its leading principles and as a whole. This is not the place for me to say why; elsewhere I have given hints as to my reasons for so doing, and those who take an interest in the subject are referred to what I have already written respecting it. (See my "Divine Inversion," Sections V. and VI., and Appendix A.) One thing, notwithstanding, in favour of this system I would suggest. That there subsist analogies between things heavenly and things earthly, however imperfectly and even erroneously Swedenborgianism may bring them out, is a truth, and a most valuable one. Compare Genesis i. 3 with 2 Cor. iv. 6; Genesis ii. 21—24 with Ephes. v. 22—32; Genesis xxi. 9—11 with Gal. iv. 22—31, &c. &c. To correct what is amiss in the Swedenborgian application of this principle, let it always be borne in mind that, in the resemblances subsisting between human and divine things we can never with truth and safety ascend from the earthly to the heavenly, but must always be content to descend from the heavenly to the earthly; Rev. xxi. 1: a circumstance which necessarily implies that he who can do so must previously have become possessed of heavenly principle, or the divine nature. To attempt to rise from the earthly to the heavenly in the prosecution of divine analogies,—innumerable instances of which characterise and disfigure the *Arcana Celestia*, the *De Cælo et de Inferno*, &c.,—is a mere exercise of human ingenuity, absolutely worthless in itself and always of necessity leading into error; to travel downwards from what is heavenly to what is earthly, led by divine teaching to observe analogies between the natural and the spiritual, soberly, accurately, and truly, is even now, and in future ages will be still more, one of the most glorious and instructive occupations of the church while in flesh; but it is a work for which he only is qualified to whom the earnest of the divine mind has been vouchsafed, and this too in proportion to the degree in which that earnest is vouchsafed to him. Let even such an

In the second place, not only will the progress of the church in divine knowledge and love, during future ages, spring from causes which stand opposed to the causes of the progress of the world in literature, science, and civilisation, but it will be progress also in a direction exactly opposite to that made by the world, just as the progress of the world will be in a direction opposite to that of the church. The world is tending more and more towards the development of the principles of human nature; the church, more and more towards the development of those of the divine nature. The world is *sowing to the flesh*, with the certainty of *reaping corruption*; the church is *sowing to the spirit*, with the certainty of *reaping life everlasting*. See Gal. vi. 8. The professed object of the world is to perfect human nature; the avowed, and blessed be God, the real and successful object of the church, is to manifest the perfections of God as displayed in Christ Jesus, and thereby to bring out in all its fulness of energy and glory the divine nature. Eph. iii. 10. To express the whole briefly:—the tendency of the one is exclusively earthwards; the tendency of the other is exclusively heavenwards. Under such circumstances, it is obvious that not only do the world and the church aim at ends the most decidedly opposed to each other possible, but that as an inevitable consequence of this, they stand to each other in the attitude of enemies; and that the natural and necessary tendency of that progress in their respective paths which they are both making is to bring out their mutual enmity with increasing intensity and virulence. In moving earthwards, the world encounters the church moving heavenwards. And so *vice versâ*. The world and the church, then, are antagonists. And their respective

individual be on his guard,—for he requires to be so,—against mistaking at any time the suggestions of his own human fancy for resemblances between things earthly and heavenly actually existing and actually revealed in the scriptures.

progresses are antagonistic likewise. Gal. v. 17. Not only the more the one advances does the other advance also, but as in advancing respectively they stand to each other in a hostile attitude, from the mutual enmity or opposition subsisting between them, of course every step in advance which they make tends more and more to bring them into a state of decided and deadly collision. Constant and increasing exhibitions of mutual enmity is of such a state of things the inevitable result. Rom. vii. 23. When the human mind and the divine mind are but slightly developed, the points of contact and opposition between them being comparatively few, their mutual enmity is only faintly discernible. Greater development of both minds, of necessity presents them under an aspect of more decided hostility the one to the other. And the greatest development of both minds is necessarily connected with the greatest exhibition of the essential enmity subsisting between both, appearing in the shape of the greatest efforts put forth by each to destroy the other. Such, I am satisfied, will be exactly the state of things visible in future ages. The world will be continually making progress in human knowledge, and in the display of human affections; the church, in divine knowledge, and in the display of divine affections. This can only happen at the expense of the two bodies approving themselves more and more the enemies of each other. The world will increasingly hate the church, its rival, and make increasing and more formidable efforts to destroy it; the church will return the compliment, by exhibiting an increasing hatred* to the world in general, and to

* This feeling on the part of the church being, as has been already shewn in this work, and as I have endeavoured at some length to prove in my "Divine Inversion,"—love in disguise: Rom. xii. 20, 21: hatred to man's nature, Jude 23, springing up in the minds of God's people from love to the divine nature; 1 John ii. 15, iv. 19; and the aim of this heavenly principle of love, disguised under the form of the earthly principle of hate, being the clothing ultimately with the image of the heavenly, through the manifestation

the nearest and dearest earthly relations in particular.* A mutual antagonism this which cannot last for ever. Sooner or later it must come to a head. Carried out on both sides to its fullest extent, in consequence of the progress, the antagonistic progress of both towards their respective ends being completed, and of both being thus brought into a state of final and deadly conflict and collision, matters can only terminate either in their mutual destruction, or in the destruction of the weaker by the stronger.

SECTION SIXTH.

CRISIS OF THE MUTUAL ANTAGONISM OF THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD.

Thus have I, by what may appear to some a roundabout, but what in order to have any chance whatever of being understood I have found to be a most necessary process, brought matters to the point at which I have been all along aiming.

God's third and last experiment upon man, with a view to afford man the opportunity of thoroughly displaying the enmity towards God cherished by his fleshly mind, is now, as for ages it has been, going on. And it will continue to go on till the end of time.

of the Son of God, of those who are now clothed with the image of the earthy; and thereby the destruction by means of the everlasting supersession of the image of the earthy. Rom. viii. 18—23, 1 Cor. xv. 49. 54, 2 Cor. v. 4.

* *If a man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.* Luke xiv. 26. See also Matt. xvi. 22, 23, and compare this last passage with Romans viii. 7, in the Greek. From the whole it results that earthly affections, however useful and important for earthly purposes, so far from coalescing with, stand irreconcilably opposed to heavenly affections.

This experiment not only goes on, but increases continually in point of intensity: becoming very strong as time draws near its close, and reaching its *maximum* when God's word in regard to the future fate of this world shall take full effect, and time shall be no more.

As since the age of the apostles the grand occasion of drawing forth exhibitions of enmity to God on the part of man has been God's simple declaration that he bestows salvation and eternal life freely, or quite irrespective of any condition or conditions performed or to be performed by the creature,—these blessings being enjoyed even now; and as the enmity in question comes out, not only in man's rejecting God's declaration as false, but in his setting up conditional schemes of salvation, to be realised if at all hereafter, in direct and diametrical opposition to God's bestowing salvation unconditionally and now; so while time rolls on will increasing occasions for the manifestation of this enmity, by views of the truth constantly increasing in clearness, be afforded by God, and will the enmity itself in the shape of rendering salvation conditional and future become more and more intensely virulent.

And as the world and the church in time past have been, and as at the present moment they are, not merely distinct but opposing and conflicting bodies, so will they continue to be. As these two bodies, the one the seed of the serpent hates the doctrine of a free salvation, and the other the seed of the woman loves it, so will they continue respectively to do. And as the enmity subsisting between the two bodies has its origin in the enmity or opposition subsisting between their respective natures,—an enmity productive of the most opposite likings and dislikings,—the one hating what the other loves and loving what the other hates, and the one therefore hating the other on the ground of their mutual antagonism of tastes; so likewise in time to come will there be a persever-

ance in this opposition of natures, and consequently of feelings and persons, to one another. A state of things which we have already seen to be mutually but antagonistically progressive, and to be tending as time draws near its close to a crisis.

Now what is to be that crisis ?

To understand this, some things must be previously and well understood.

Man's enmity to God is not yet thoroughly displayed. So close, so inseparable indeed, is the connexion subsisting between the thorough display of that enmity, and the uselessness of any further continuance of this present state of things, that if that enmity could at this present moment be brought out in all its fulness, time would immediately end.

Man's enmity to God, however, must be thoroughly displayed. It must be brought out sooner or later to the fullest extent possible. Without this, God's experiment would be incomplete. Such a result of course cannot take place. The enmity must ultimately appear in its highest degree, and with its greatest intensity of virulence. When thus fully brought out, time will be no more : God will thenceforward have no further occasion to avail himself of the instrumentality of beings clothed with flesh.

The crisis in question, then, will take place in connexion with the highest possible display of man's enmity to God.

But enmity to God on the part of the world now appears, and to the end of time will continue to appear, in the form of enmity to the divinely revealed truth of a free and present salvation : enmity to the church as divinely taught, rejoicing in, and exhibiting the effects of this heavenly truth,—being the grand, I might almost say the only medium through which this enmity is capable of being displayed.

The reason of which is, that the church of God is not only one with God, but is also, if I may so express myself, the

doctrine of a free and present salvation embodied and personified. Men in general are not qualified to deal with abstractions. They hate a free salvation; but they hate it as exemplified in and enjoyed by the members of the church of God.

This simple fact furnishes us with a clue to the understanding of the future and final history of this present world. Not certainly of all its details, but of its prominent and leading features.

Exclusive of the church, mankind, as we have seen, will continue advancing or making progress in one of two ways: either first, in mere secular knowledge and civilization; or secondly, in the knowledge and profession of fleshly religion.

All human beings, I observe, who do not belong to the church of God, are capable of being reduced to two classes. Those on the one hand who are making progress in the arts and sciences, and rejoice in seeing mankind carried forward independently as they fancy of revelation,—they hating revelation and its supporters with an open and intense hatred. This embraces all the sceptical, the deistical, and the atheistical. And those on the other hand to whom religion, as wearing an external, earthly, and fleshly aspect, is in one way or another, and to one degree or another, subject matter of concern. These two classes, when duly considered, will be found to be neither more nor less than the Sadducees and Pharisees of scripture, although with views in certain respects more enlarged, and existing and acting on a somewhat larger scale. Nor need this surprise us. Sadduceeism and Pharisæism, according as the merely intellectual or the fleshly religious character shall happen to prevail, are principles not confined to any particular age or country, but belong to all ages and countries, as having their foundations laid deeply in human nature itself.

The Sadducean or intellectual party, like their prototypes

of old, will be disposed to ascribe the great advance and improvement in civilization visible among mankind in a future period to their own exertions and attainments, not only irrespective of revelation, but, as they would fain represent matters, in direct opposition to its tendencies. So far from making the slightest allowance for the immense advantages even externally, and most certainly intellectually, which mankind will have derived from the light and influence of the scriptures operating even naturally upon the heart and conscience, all such advantages will be claimed by the "march of intellect" men, as due solely to their own powers, merits, and sagacity. Revelation, indeed, viewed as a source of knowledge and principle of conduct, will by men whose characteristic it is to glory in the dignity and capacities of human nature be thrown overboard altogether. To them its contents will be as "old wives' fables."

The Pharisaical or fleshly religious party, again, will deem themselves under an increasing obligation to make greater and greater exertions in what they would fain persuade themselves and others is the cause of God. As the Pharisees of old *compassed sea and land to make one proselyte*, so in order to convert Mahometan and heathen nations, will every species of moral and religious machinery be set in motion by their christianized imitators and descendants. Bible societies and missionary societies are probably but the precursors of means of a still more vigorous and efficient description, to be employed in after ages for proselytising purposes. The human conscience once thoroughly roused cannot by any mere human expedients be set at rest. It is, in so far as mind is concerned, the true perpetual motion. It is continually suggesting and stimulating to the employment of new methods of striving to satisfy itself. Unsuccessfully, no doubt; for natural conscience unsatisfied by such expedients still, *like the daughter of the horse leech,*

utters its cravings — *Give, give.* But increasing exertions man's conscience, in spite of every disappointment, does make, and will make To make proselytes will be one of its grandest efforts, perhaps its grandest. And for this purpose new methods will be had recourse to, as well as old ones be more vigorously plied. Proselytes, too, it will make. Probably in a constantly increasing *ratio*. But such converts (I am not speaking of God's converts, to whose spiritual illumination pharisaical teachers may, in opposition to and in spite of their own aims and objects, be from time to time rendered subservient,) will resemble the converts of the Pharisees, as their teachers resemble the Pharisees themselves. Hating, with an awful intensity of hatred, the truth of a free, present, and personal salvation, and glorying in those doubts and fears of their own personal interest in life everlasting which they cherish, they will merely have thrown off the slough of their previous irreligious form, and assumed the religious one, in order to evince themselves *tenfold more the children of hell than they were before.*

These two great parties will be in time to come, as they have been in time past, much divided among themselves. As formerly, so in future, will the intellectual faction comprehend various sects; and so, the fleshly religious. And these sects will be found frequently disputing with one another. One sect of the intellectual body with another; one sect of the religious, with another. Frequently, however, they will appear to agree: the various sects of the intellectual dropping for a time their mutual differences, and concurring in the prosecution of some common object; and the various sects of the religious, also, for a time ceasing from mutual hostilities, that they may have it in their power to unite in the prosecution of some common object likewise.

This, however, is not all.

Differing, widely differing, although the intellectual and

the fleshly religious, the Sadducean and the Pharisaical parties do, at bottom, strange as the assertion may appear, they are nevertheless agreed. Both, however different* may be the ways in which they shew themselves, are merely acting under the influence of the principles of human nature. Both are exhibiting, although in different* ways, the operation of that *mind of flesh* which is *enmity against God*; and, owing to this common origin of their respective phenomena, both, when necessary, can concur in exhibiting the native enmity of their hearts with reference to one common object.

This common object of enmity, they find in the saved ones, or church of God, and in the doctrine of a free, certain, and personal salvation; as well as in the sentiment of love to God as having first loved them, by which all the members of that church are distinguished.

In other words, worldly men, whether profane or religious, however great may be their mutual dislike, can nevertheless concur in hating God's people, and the divine principles of light and love by which God's people are characterised.

In every age, as we have seen, enmity to this divinely separated body of individuals has, in fulfilment of the first promise, existed in the breasts, and has more or less shewn itself in the procedure of the world. See Gen. iii. 15. At present, however, this enmity is but slightly discernible, owing to the comparative smallness of the heavenly church's numbers; owing to the exceedingly inconsistent way in which its members sustain their own character; and, above all, owing to the degree in which they are so mixed up with, as to be scarcely distinguishable from mere worldly churches and communities. Therefore it is, that they are now scarcely noticed; or if noticed, considered scarcely deserving to be the

* Not *opposite*. One principle as well as one practice of human nature *differs from* another; it is peculiar to the principles and practices of the divine nature to *stand opposed to* those of human nature. Gal. v. 17; also John iii. 6.

objects of a formidable attack by the unregenerate. As time rolls on, matters will somewhat change. Fleshly religious communities will be more and more abandoned by children of God; while greater consistency of doctrine and circumspection of practice will characterise them, externally even, as separated from their former associates. They will stand out, distinguished equally from the profane and from the worldly religious. Still, it appears to me that it will not be till towards the end of time they will particularly attract the notice of the world, on account of the formidable attitude of opposition in which they will then be seen standing to it; and that having once decidedly caught the world's attention, they will become the objects of its bitter, unrelenting, and deadly hostility. Up to that period, Satan will be chained. Rev. xx. 1. Comparatively numerous, when that æra shall arrive, and decided; standing aloof from fleshly religious associations altogether; possessed of much of the mind of the glorified Jesus, and animated by much of that true and heavenly love to God and man, which, as it is hated by the flesh, also hates flesh; exposing equally and impartially, by their statements and actions, the character of the Sadducee and the Pharisee, and keeping no terms with either; no wonder if then the enmity of the serpent's seed shall come to a head against the seed of the woman: no wonder if, in exhibitions of this enmity, the intellectual and the worldly religious shall most cordially unite; and if by both a deadly onslaught shall be made on persons whom they cannot help regarding as their common foes,—whom, in order to justify their conduct, they agree in representing as the common foes both of God and man. Such, while in flesh, was the treatment undergone by the Head; such, while in flesh, will, I am satisfied, be the treatment undergone by the members. Christ, once crucified personally in flesh, by means of an unholy confederacy between Sadducees and Pharisees, between

Jews and Gentiles, will, now that, although personally glorified in spirit, his church is still, as to the bodies of its members, in flesh, be exposed to be crucified a second time, in the persons of those who know his name, and love his appearing, by means of a similar unholy combination.

The exact details of this future assault upon the church by the world, consisting of both the irreligious and the religious, must remain unknown until the event itself shall disclose them. But the leading features of this closing scene of the last exhibition of man's enmity to God, may, taking the hints furnished us by the sacred volume for our guide, be, without any great difficulty or risque of mistake, delineated.

Up to a comparatively remote period of this world's history, the two great classes of the intellectual and the fleshly religious will, I am satisfied, with perhaps occasional exceptions, continue each pursuing their separate courses. The intellectual becoming more and more learned, and the fleshly religious more and more pious and devout upon their own principles. Towards each other, all the while,—with the occasional exceptions just referred to—their feelings will be anything but those of amity. Cordially hating each other, their mutual dislike will in a great variety of ways, especially in a constant condemnation of each other's principles and practices, be finding vent for the expression of itself.

During the existence of this period of mutual dislike on the part of their common foes, the members of the true and heavenly church of God will be growing in numbers and in possession of the mind of Christ. Not receiving new written revelations, certainly; but having the meaning of that revealed will of God which has for so long a time been committed to writing, opened up with continual increase of light and power to their hearts and consciences. In this way will not only their knowledge, but their love and other christian graces, become gradually more and more developed. For a

long time, just as at present, their numbers may be too small, and they may be too much mixed up externally with worldly religious associations, to attract much notice. When looked at, it may be only to draw forth some passing expression of contempt. Some sneer, perhaps, at their singularities. Some expression of wonder that persons so few in number, and so insignificant otherwise, should have the folly, as well as audacity, to set themselves in opposition to the sentiments of the wise, the learned, and those who by the world are accounted the pious. By and by, however, as the numbers of these singular ones grow, and they begin to stand more decidedly aloof from the world, both professing and profane, the previous feeling of contempt will become more and more tinctured with malignity, and will at last strengthen and settle down into absolute hatred. The Sadducean or intellectual party will feel, that the continued existence, and growing consistency of these few is a fact which all their boasted philosophy cannot account for; that fanaticism, however easily and satisfactorily it may explain many of the phenomena of ordinary religion, will not explain their's; and that, as heavenly in their principles, delights, and aims, and attaching supreme importance to heavenly things, they are practically pouring contempt upon all aims and pursuits which are bounded by earth, and by the amelioration of man's state and condition upon earth, such as are the aims and pursuits in which human philosophy indulges and delights. And the Pharisaical, or worldly religious party, will feel that these few, as rejoicing in Christ Jesus only,—as knowing themselves to be personally partakers of life everlasting, the gift of God,—and as shewing that they regard the kingdom of God to be solely internal and heavenly, admitting of no human by-ends, and no hypocritical subserviency to earthly advantages,—are men who are practically testifying of them, whose characteristic it is to glory in the flesh, and their own superiority to others, to

express themselves ignorant and uncertain of their own personal interest in life everlasting, and to countenance and support a state of religion which is external, fleshly, and in many respects conducive to their worldly interests,—I say, they will feel that the few are practically testifying of them, that they, their thoughts, and their words are only and thoroughly evil.* To them, the few heavenly-minded ones will be what Micaiah the son of Imlah was to the monarch of Samaria, who, speaking of him, said to his brother monarch of Judea, *I hate him ; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil.* 1 Kings xxii. 8.

When matters shall at last have come to this pass, the train is laid for union between the intellectual and the fleshly religious, the Sadducean and the Pharisaical parties. And woe be to the poor and formerly despised, but then intensely hated church, were not the Lord on her side.†

At present, we who know the truth owe our safety as much to our adversaries' ignorance of what we are, of the objects at which we are aiming, and of the purposes to which in God's hands we are subservient, as to our apparent insignificance. Had they the slightest suspicion of our real importance as a body who are destined to be ever on the increase, and who are at a future period of the world to give human nature, whether profane or religious, the greatest annoyance—indeed, who are to be ultimately the means of human nature's and this world's complete destruction—our situation now would be anything but a comfortable, nay more, would be anything but a safe one. Happy is it for us that the eyes of worldly men are now holden. Happy for us that Satan is now bound. Were matters otherwise, the advice given, not

* See John vii. 7; also John xv. 18—21, and 1 John iii. 1. While the disciples were earthly, the world could not hate them; it was in becoming heavenly, with their Head, that they were to draw down upon themselves the enmity of the world.

† Psalm cxxiv. throughout.

many years ago, to a friend of mine, by a clergyman in high repute among the so-styled evangelical, "*to burn a certain book,*" on account of what was conceived to be its dangerous tendency, might be matured into a plan for the subjecting of our bodies to a similar fiery ordeal.

The intellectual and the worldly religious, Gog and Magog, will then, towards the close of time, in consequence of their attention being at last drawn particularly and forcibly towards men, whom formerly they had deemed only fitting objects of contempt, and in consequence of Satan being loosed from the restraint under which previously he was held, unite themselves in an unholy confederacy, the object of which will be the utter extirpation of the seed of the woman, or members of the heavenly church, from the face of the earth. Rev. xx. 7—9.

However great may have been the dislike cherished and manifested by the profane and the professing, the Sadducees and the Pharisees, towards each other formerly,—and great that dislike is and will long continue to be,—all feelings of mutual hatred will then be for the time suspended. Old grudges and animosities will appear almost as it were forgotten. A common enemy then claims their regard, and it seems to demand their combined and most strenuous efforts to put him down.

A small body of individuals assert, that they and their doctrines exclusively are heavenly, and thereby condemn all others. Can this for a moment be tolerated by the direct worshippers of earth, and by those who clothe religion with a mere earthly form and aspect? Can a small minority be permitted thus to lacerate the feelings of, and to pour contempt on the great majority? Certainly not.

Marshallled and led on under their respective leaders, the number of the enemies of the church of God shall be *as the sand of the sea*. Rev. xx. 8. And well may they be represented as being so, when we consider that they shall embrace

the whole human family, the nations of which are elsewhere fitly compared to the sea, fluctuating, turbulent, and noisy, Rev. xvii. 15, with the exception only of the saints, or separated ones themselves.

The camp of the saints, and *the beloved city*, are then by the combined forces of infidels and merely professing believers compassed about. And so numerous and powerful are the enemies of the church,—the whole of the rest of the human race being banded together against a few insignificant individuals,—that there appears to be no way of escape for these devoted ones, from the squadrons and vengeful malignity of their beleaguering foes. Like the Israelites at Pi-ha-hiroth, when hemmed in by the Egyptians on one side, and by the Red Sea on the other, Exod. xiv. 5—14, so completely will the church be surrounded by the men of the world that its destruction will seem to be inevitable.

Then shall matters be brought to that crisis, to which, from the creation of the world, they have been tending.

The mutual enmity subsisting between *the seed of the serpent* and *the seed of the woman* shall then have attained to its height, and God himself will then, as it were, be appealed to, to decide the long pending controversy.

Beautifully and truly says Sandeman, in the preface to the second edition of his Letters on the Dialogues of Theron and Aspasio, “The voice of Him, who, at the beginning of the world, ranging mankind into two classes, said, *I will put enmity*, &c., will as certainly have its constant effect to the end of it, as the word which at first separated the waters from the dry land.” And it is of the end of the world, when the divine voice in question shall have its full effect, when the seed of the woman shall thoroughly crush the serpent’s head, that we are now speaking.

The members of the heavenly church constitute God’s embodied truth. They are hated by the world, as those who,

knowing salvation to be freely, presently, and personally theirs, 1 John v, 11, make an open profession of their enjoying this privilege, by separating themselves completely from external and earthly religious associations by whom this truth is denied. It is actually indeed not so much themselves, as God's truth of salvation and everlasting life unconditionally bestowed through the finished work of his well-beloved Son, exemplified then in the highest degree possible upon earth, in their knowledge, love, and divine experience, that the world hates. I say, in the highest degree possible upon earth. For the numbers of the church, the knowledge of the church, and the love of the church cannot, while she is in her earthly state, exceed what, on occasion of this outbreak and assault upon her of a combined world, they shall be found to be. She will then, as a body of persons dwelling in flesh and blood, have reached her acmé and zenith.

And so, on the other hand, the world will then be exhibiting its enmity to God, through its enmity to his church, in the highest degree, and to the greatest extent to which it is possible for it to do so. In the world's numbers there can be no increase; for all, old and young, learned and unlearned, professing and profane, will then be embarked in the confederacy against the church. Human knowledge and civilization, too, will then have been carried out to the highest pitch. And the members of external and earthly churches, then openly and avowedly joined to that world from which, in spite of all their protestations to the contrary, they have never been brought out,* shall know and profess the utmost concerning fleshly religion which the mere reason of man, aided by learning, science, study, the dictates of natural conscience, and biblical researches and criticism, qualifies them for attaining to. Human nature will then be in all respects

* 1 John ii. 19.

as complete, as perfectly improved, cultivated, and refined as possible. Under such circumstances, too, what it is,—improved, cultivated, and refined in the highest degree,—it will be externally shewing itself in the highest degree to be ; the greatest social comfort, the most perfect amenity and courtesy of manners, the most cordial sympathy and good feeling among all classes and descriptions of human beings,* characterising the whole exterior of society. But what of all this ? The nature thus rendered lovely and captivating in the eyes of man, is essentially enmity to God. It will then, notwithstanding the aspect of amiableness thrown over the intercourse of mankind with one another, be, like the tiger, ready to make its fatal spring, and, by exhibiting hatred to God's people in the highest degree, to exhibit in the highest degree hatred to God himself. The last experiment upon man, made with a view to his shewing himself to be necessarily and essentially God's enemy, an experiment now going on, will then have reached its last and culminating point. Every thing will then be in the highest degree of manifestation. The church, the embodied truth, assaulted by a world unanimous in its disposition and determination to crush it, will be exhibiting the greatest divine light and love competent to beings in flesh ; the world will be exhibiting its enmity in a way and to a degree condensed and concentrated, such as it never was before. The greatest amount of human enmity will then appear arrayed and embattled in opposition to the greatest amount of divine love, which, in the members of the church while in their present embodied state and condition, can dwell.

* Always excepting the church.

SECTION SEVENTH.

GOD'S ULTIMATE INTERPOSITION, IN THE COURSE OF HIS PROVIDENCE, AND ACCORDING TO PROPHECY, ENDS THE LONG-PENDING CONTROVERSY BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD, BY DECIDING IN FAVOUR OF THE FORMER. END OF THE WORLD. END OF HUMAN NATURE. END OF THE THIRD AND LAST AGE OR ÆRA OF TIME.

Matters being thus situated, both parties stand on the brink of a most important revolution.

The end of this present world impends.

Then cometh that end.

God hath, from the period of the fall, been observing, superintending, directing, and controlling the grand controversy between *the seed of the serpent* and *the seed of the woman*. He has been affording to man constantly increasing opportunities of manifesting his enmity to *the truth*, and to the church as knowing *the truth*, as influenced by *the truth*, and as practically shewing forth *the truth*—opportunities of which man has eagerly availed himself. On the other hand, he has been affording an ever-increasing manifestation of *the truth* to the members of the church themselves, thereby keeping ever on the increase their competency to bear witness to it. Ultimately the enmity of the world to the truth, and to the church as embodying the truth, amounting to positive rage and fury, can be restrained within no bounds. Nothing but the destruction of the truth and its supporters will satisfy fleshly mind. Then does God interfere effectually for the preservation of his own, and for the punishment of his and the church's enemies. *Fire came*

down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. Rev. xx. 9. See also 2 Thess. i. 7—10, and 2 Peter iii. 10—12.

Such is the close of the third and last experiment of God on man. Man's exhibition of enmity to God is then complete. Man, therefore, is then subjected to the third and highest punishment which he is to meet with at the hands of God. He is overwhelmed with complete and everlasting destruction. 2 Thess. i. 8, 9. Formerly successive generations of the children of men had died in virtue of Adam's sin, the first and lowest exhibition of enmity having been visited with the first and lowest degree of punishment; and also, flesh and blood had been completely and for ever excluded from the kingdom of God, in consequence of the sin against the Holy Ghost committed by the earthly church,—a higher exhibition of human enmity having thus been followed by a higher infliction of divine punishment. But then, as the result of an exhibition of enmity to God of the most flagrant and awful description,—an exhibition of enmity which shews that fleshly mind can be satisfied with nothing short of the sweeping away of God's name, cause, and people entirely from the face of the earth,—the race of man itself is, in appropriate and righteous retribution, to be entirely swept away. Man's existence is to terminate for ever. The highest exhibition of enmity on his part is to be visited with the highest punishment on God's part. The earth, man's dwelling-place, stained for ages with sin,—indeed, groaning as it were under the burden of human guilt and corruption, Rom. viii. 22;—and man himself, then proved in the highest degree possible to be possessed of a nature not only enmity against God, but capable of the most atrocious displays of that enmity;—have thenceforward no place found for them. Having fully answered their purpose, in shewing that man's mind, as enmity to God, can neither obey his law, nor acquiesce in his gospel; that while it continues fleshly mind, so far from being

softened by the manifestations of God's love, it is capable, on the contrary, of being hardened to the greatest pitch of hatred and violent opposition to God by them ; the divine vengeance, in its most awful form, and widest range of operation, overtakes them. *They are no more.* Psalm civ. 35. They are blotted out for ever from the face of the universe.

In all this we behold the sacrifice of Christ receiving its full effect. He was the true burnt-offering, in the consuming of whom on the cross, and by his descent into hades, human nature itself was virtually consumed. Levit. i., throughout. One with man—with *all men*, as second Adam—man, as a matter of necessity, shares his fate. *Virtually* consumed in Christ's sacrifice, as the destruction of the Mosaic economy was a *partial* consummation, so will the ultimate and everlasting destruction of human nature itself be the *entire* consummation of that sacrifice.

Am I understood ? If not, let me try the effect of the following statement. As human nature appeared in a three-fold order, first, as an earthly whole in Adam and his posterity ; secondly, as an earthly church, or election in Abraham and his posterity ; and thirdly, as an earthly unit, in the flesh and blood manifestation of our blessed Lord,—a subject which I have endeavoured to bring out and explain in the eleventh section of my “ Divine Inversion ;” so, but in the inverse or opposite order, is the earthly state of man in a threefold manner destroyed. First, our Lord, the glorious Unit, destroys the earthly nature, personally in himself, through his death and descent into hades ; secondly, he destroys the earthly church or election through that overthrow of Judaism which took place about forty years after his resurrection, and its everlasting exclusion from the heavenly kingdom ; and, thirdly, he destroys the earthly whole, through bringing to an end human nature and this present world at the close of time, and the consequences of that event.

This closing scene will take the worldly portion of mankind unawares. Miracles having entirely ceased, nothing in the shape of an external sign from above, nothing, indeed, but the despised declarations of God's word will attest its approach. So far from indicating that destruction is near, the aspect of earthly things will be smiling, attractive, and seem to promise perpetuity. Every thing in the world, except the existence, doctrines, and conduct of those most annoying and provoking individuals, the members of the church of God, will be gratifying to fleshly mind. All around will breathe the language of progress and prosperity. Arts and sciences flourishing, governments liberal and enlightened, mankind civilised, and fleshly religion everywhere in repute, with its votaries constantly on the increase. What can be conceived to present a higher or brighter picture of worldly happiness? And by the world it will be regarded as doing so. The golden age, that dream of the poetical and the imaginative, may even be fabled to have again dawned on our earth. But "the canker worm is in the bud." Over man—man's prospects, and man's very existence, sudden destruction is impending. *As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark; and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot, they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded: but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day that the Son of Man is revealed.* Luke xvii. 26—30. Nothing, then, will contribute to throw a veil over the bright and festive scene which shall immediately precede the second coming of Jesus, the destruction of the world, and the end of time, but the existence of the few who testify to the despised truth of life everlasting being freely and presently

and certainly enjoyed by themselves; and who, separated by that truth from the Sodom of earthly pursuits and earthly religion, testify of the world that, in spite of all fair appearances to the contrary, its deeds are evil, and the divine vengeance is ready to overtake it. These wayward and troublesome personages then, "enemies of mankind" as Tacitus styles the Jews, the world conceives that it must get rid of. Its own comfort and tranquillity, and the continuance of its prosperity, require this. An attempt, therefore, is made to relieve the world of its tormentors. Unfortunately for the world, however, in attacking the church, it attacks those whom God regards and *keeps as the apple of his eye*. In attacking the church, they attack God, with whom the church is one. This attempt of their's to get rid of the members of the church—the beings for whose sakes, as *the salt of the earth*, the material universe is kept in existence—is what brings on the long threatened and final catastrophe. In their anxiety to destroy God's church, by provoking God to the uttermost they only succeed in unexpectedly destroying themselves.

Not that the world will be left without warnings of the event which is approaching; but that these warnings will by the world be unheeded or misinterpreted. The church will observe and profit by them; the wicked *will pass on and be punished*. Prov. xxii. 3, xxvii. 12. *Wars and rumours of wars*, controversies among different sects and parties, shall have spent their fury and past away. Matt. xxiv. 6—14. The "brotherhood of man with man," that dream of the enthusiastic Burns, shall have been recognised and established. Tranquillity will universally prevail. What better augury can be conceived? what state of things more promising of future earthly good? And yet to him who is taught from above all this will speak a language exactly the reverse. To him it will appear to be but the lull, the calm before the storm. Invested in his eyes with characters of

fearful import, it will present a series of phenomena constituting the most striking precursors of the world's overthrow. Nor will this be all. The church will have higher and more direct evidence of what is approaching than mere external circumstances afford. In Christ's own word, which is ever a pillar of cloud to the world, but of light to the church, separating the one from the other, Exodus xiv. 19, 20, will he to his people be more and more drawing near; while, like lightning, "heaven's red artillery," flashing from the east to the west, will the true consuming fire of divine revelation, 2 Thess. ii. 8, Heb. xii. 29, be gleaming fitfully from Asia's fertile plains, through cultivated Europe, to lands situated beyond the broad Atlantic wave. But for the world every prognostic of coming vengeance shall have expended itself in vain. That love to flesh, and to the things of flesh—that love to this present world, and desire to promote its fancied interests,—that hatred of a free and full salvation, which are essential to and characteristic of humanity,—will, in spite of every warning to the contrary, urge man on to his final exhibition of enmity to God. Nay, what are in reality warnings, will to him constitute allurements to his ruin. He will thus plunge headlong into Tophet, into that gulph of destruction which, before the world began, and consequently before sin and death entered into the world, was prepared for him. Isaiah xxx. 33; Jeremiah xix.

The heavens and the earth which are now, by the word of God are kept in store, reserved unto fire, against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men.

The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat: the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up. 2 Peter iii. 7. 10.

So terminates the third and last *αιων*, age or *æra*, of this world.

CONCLUSION.

CONCLUSION.

EXPLANATION OF THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF MAN'S ENMITY AND MAN'S PUNISHMENT, AS DISTINGUISHED FROM THEIR PROGRESSIVE MANIFESTATIONS. EXPLANATION OF THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE DIVINE MERCY, AS DISTINGUISHED FROM ITS PROGRESSIVE MANIFESTATIONS. EXPLANATION OF THE WAY IN WHICH LAW, SIN, AND DEATH ARE PROGRESSIVELY DESTROYED.

SECTION FIRST.

MISTAKES DEPRECATED. HUMAN NATURE THE SAME IN EVERY ONE AND IN EVERY AGE. THE MANIFESTATIONS OF THAT NATURE PROGRESSIVE.

OBSERVATIONS drawn out to so great a length, and so minute as have been those which precede, scarcely justify me in troubling my readers with a protracted conclusion. And yet the surpassing importance of the topics which are involved in and connected with my main propositions, as well as the risque which, were I to stop here, I should almost

inevitably run of being in many respects misunderstood, seem to demand on my part various additional explanatory details.

The two grand facts insisted on by me throughout the foregoing pages, facts which must have struck those who have honoured me with their attention, are,

First, that progressive manifestation of enmity to God, by which the history of the human race, as recorded by the pen of inspiration, is distinguished. Man does not all at once appear to be God's enemy, in the highest sense and to the greatest degree. On the contrary, his necessary and essential, his thorough opposition to God is only gradually developed. At first he merely violates a law of prohibition, restraining from an act of apparently the most trifling nature; —then, with more intense virulence of hatred, he disobeys a law of command, enjoining a practice, which, if it could have been performed by him, would have ensured to him in his own right possession of the heavenly kingdom; —and lastly, but not until after having gone through the previous stages of guilt, does he set himself in an attitude of resistance to God the most decided, persevering, and uncompromising; venturing either after a more profane or after a more pious fashion to give God the lie; and this by maintaining that God bestows spiritual and heavenly blessings upon conditions, in the teeth of God's own declarations that he bestows salvation and eternal life freely, without exacting the fulfilment of any condition whatever, great or small, internal or external, on the part of the creature. Enmity to God can go no further than this; or the irreconcilable opposition subsisting between the nature of the creature and that of the Creator, in the fact of man's exhibiting deadly hatred of a salvation which is in the strictest sense of the terms unconditionally bestowed and enjoyed, reaches its acmé.

Secondly. As the enmity of man progresses, so does the

punishment of man progress likewise. The sin of Adam in violating the law of prohibition is punished with the loss of this present life; the sin of the Jews in disobeying the law of command is punished by exclusion from the heavenly kingdom; and the sin of mankind in general,—the sin which is now being committed,—in rejecting a free salvation, and preferring to it one clogged with conditions imposed by themselves, and requiring to be fulfilled by themselves, is punished with their complete and everlasting destruction. The human race, with the present earth its appropriate habitation, is, when human guilt reaches its climax, swept away. Progress in punishment thus attends on, and is exactly commensurate with progress in guilt.

Various other interesting and important matters have been brought under notice and treated of in the course of the work. Such for instance as, 1, that in the consequences of each exhibition of enmity, others besides those immediately committing the act have been involved: in Adam's, all his posterity; in that of the Jews, the whole Gentile world; and in that of mankind in general, all infants, idiots, and heathens. 2. A remarkable variety in the number of the persons upon whom the experiments have been made: the first upon one, the second upon a whole nation, and the third upon mankind in general. And 3, the first experiment having implied merely restraint with loss; the second having been a direct test of ability or inability to obey, with the prospect of gain; and the third being a trial as to whether the creature can abstain from acting altogether, and can acquiesce passively in the reception of a favour which is freely bestowed. Besides other topics. But the two facts spoken of in the two immediately preceding paragraphs constitute the grand staple of my book, and are the subjects to which I would now specially invite attention.

The principal mistakes concerning my meaning into which the careless and the ill-instructed are liable to fall are,

1. That it is my intention to represent human nature as having become actually and essentially worse, as each of the experiments of which I treat in the preceding pages has progressively been made ; and,

2. That it is my intention to represent the actual punishment of human nature as greater in one class of human beings, and at one period of man's history, than in and at another. In other words, that it is my intention to represent human nature in the Jews as having actually undergone a severer punishment than it underwent in Adam, and human nature in us as undergoing a severer punishment than it did in the two preceding æras.

Nothing can be conceived more inconsistent with and more adverse to my real sentiments, than such representations of them. Nay, there are no mistakes in regard to my meaning and object into which spiritually enlightened readers of my work are less likely to fall. But all are not spiritually enlightened. And all are not candid. With a view to meet and obviate the misapprehensions of the ignorant, and the misrepresentations of the artful and unprincipled, as also to assist me in bringing out my meaning if possible still more clearly, I am induced to submit the observations which follow.

First. Human nature is not worse now than it was at any former period ; nor is it the object of any part of this treatise to represent it as being so. Human nature now is in all its constituent elements and essential features exactly what it was when the fall of Adam took place—neither better nor worse. Nay, with the single exception, that as created it was pure and guiltless, that is, free from actual transgression, human nature is now, in all its constituent elements and essential features, exactly what it was as it came originally

from the plastic hand of God. It was then *of the earth, earthy*, both as to body and mind. 1 Cor. xv. 47, with Gen. ii. 7. It is still the same.

What has actually happened, what stands recorded in the inspired volume, and what I have been endeavouring to shew is, not that the evil of man's nature has been increasing, but that the extent of the evil of man's nature, exhibited in the form of opposition to God, has been matter of progressive manifestation. That is, man's evil has been always the same; but its nature and magnitude have been made known, not all at once, but gradually. At first that evil is set before us, embodied in an action which indicated no more than inability* to refrain from violating a divine law of prohibition. Gen. ii. 16, 17; iii. 6. Then it appears in the shape of inability to obey a divine law of command. Acts xiii. 40, 41; xxviii. 25—28. And, lastly, it assumes the character of inability to recognise the non-existence now of any divine law whatever, and in necessary connexion with this, to recognise eternal life as what God declares it to be, solely and exclusively his gift. Heb. viii. 8—12; 1 John v. 11. But this last species of inability on the part of man, although only brought to light and made known since the passing away of the Mosaic dispensation, was as much a quality of human nature when it proceeded from the hands of God, as it is a quality of human nature now. Just as man's inability to obey the divine command to believe, although only brought out in the fulness of its manifestation subsequently to the resurrection of Christ, and before the Mosaic dispensation passed away, was actually a quality of human nature from its very origin. What I have been contending for throughout the whole of

* Inability being here used as synonymous with disinclination. Man cannot obey God's law or manifest any spiritual principle, because he will not; and he will not, because his nature being fleshly, not spiritual, he cannot. James i. 13—15, compared with Romans viii. 3, 4.

the preceding work is, not that at each succeeding stage of divine experiment upon man, human nature became worse than it previously was, but that at each succeeding stage of experiment a deeper, fuller, and more complete, as well as more satisfactory view of the actually existing evil of human nature, and of its radical opposition to God, was given, than had previously been brought out. By these successive experiments it has been ascertained and proved, not certainly to those believers who lived before the destruction of Jerusalem, but to those who have lived since, that the nature of man is in all ages and under all circumstances so desperately wicked, and so essentially opposed to God, as to render it impossible for that nature, when brought to the test, to exhibit agreement with the mind of God in any one respect whatever: to acquiesce passively in God's gospel, any more than to obey actively God's law. Previously to the destruction of Jerusalem, man, as in the case of Adam, had only shewn himself unable to refrain from evil, and, as in the case of the Jews, to do that which is good. Inability to abstain from the one, and to perform the other, was, therefore, before that event, the highest view of man's enmity to God which the saints were capable of taking. The enmity of man to God is now however shewn, not in disobeying divinely imposed law, but in trampling under foot divinely revealed fact. Not in disobeying the law of faith, but in representing the knowledge of God, which is solely the result of God's revealing himself to the creature, to be a law addressed by God to the creature, which it is obligatory upon the creature to obey. In this is the manifestation of the enmity of the creature to the Creator complete; and this manifestation of the extent of creature enmity is imparted only to those members of the church who live in the third and last æra of the world.

Our understanding that, not man's enmity to God, but the manifestation of that enmity, is progressive, serves to explain

to us the method observed by God in conducting his experiments upon man. Adam when tried, cannot abstain from violating the divine law of prohibition. Gen. iii. 6. His personal violation of it is at once assumed to be the violation of it on the part of all; and all therefore are involved in the consequences. Gen. iii. 19; Rom. v. 12. Murmuring, however, in regard to this might arise, as we know it has arisen, on account of Adam's act having been that of an individual, and of the alleged injustice of punishing others for what he only was guilty of. God, in order to justify the equity of his procedure in this matter, and thereby to stop the mouths of the most perverse and sceptical, has had recourse to a species of practical *à fortiori* argument. He confutes objectors, not only by setting before them repeated instances of the inability of the Jews, when tried, to abstain from violating laws of prohibition addressed to them; Psalm lxxviii. throughout; but also by convicting every one of mature age, through the medium of the decisions pronounced by his own conscience, of his inability, when suitably tried, to abstain from violating even the prohibitions imposed by him on himself. Rom. ii. 14, 15. The conclusion from this is obvious. If unable to act up to the dictates of our own creature minds, brought down and accommodated as these necessarily are as much as possible to the low standard of our own human ideas and inclinations, how much less able must we be to act up to and comply with the high, heavenly, and uncompromising requirements of the law of God! Psalm cxix. 96; Rom. vii. 12—14; viii. 3. Hence God's dealings with us. Beings who cannot act up to the dictates of their own consciences, and consequently much less to the dictates of God, have it correctly assumed as the basis of God's dealings with them, that, as possessed of the same nature which the actual transgressor had, they must of necessity, if subjected to the same divine law of prohibition that he was,

have acted, in his circumstances, precisely as he himself did.— But not satisfied with this *negative* although conclusive mode of dealing with objectors, God advances a step farther in the path of *positive* self-vindication. For, next in the order of grand experiments upon man, stands the Jews' rejection of the command to believe on Jesus crucified and glorified, the long promised and long expected Messiah. This sin of their's is likewise assumed to be the sin of all, and all, therefore, are involved in its consequences. Matt. xxv. 46; 1 Cor. xv. 50. Here, also, God is found practically justifying himself for treating the sin of *some* as the sin of *all*, as well in regard to Adam and those who lived before the apostolic period, as to us who have lived and who do live since. Plain is it, that if Adam could not refrain from violating the least burdensome of all conceivable prohibitions, Gen. ii. 16, 17, iii. 6, and if the Jews, before Christ made his appearance, could not refrain from violating the various prohibitory laws addressed to them,—which, however severe they might be, nevertheless fell in with their fleshly notions and prejudices, Isaiah i. throughout, Acts vii. 51, Heb. ix. 10,—much less, if tried and left to themselves, could either Adam or the Jews of a former period have complied with a divine law of command, which, instead of requiring them merely *negatively* to abstain, required them *positively* to sacrifice every previous long-cherished prejudice, to deny themselves to all that previously they had held dear, and to embrace and seize on a higher and holier state of things. Matt. x. 37—39, Gal. vi. 14, Colos. iii. 1, 2. And as to us who have lived since the apostolic period, men who cannot compel themselves to believe with entire confidence their own carefully concocted and prescribed theological systems, adjusted although these be to their own natural views and inclinations, much less can compel themselves, or are able to believe a system which, as heavenly and divine, stands in direct and irreconcilable opposition to

all their fleshly notions of religion. Therefore it is that, most logically and irresistibly, on the *à fortiori* principle of inability to comply with the easier obligation implying of necessity *much less* ability to comply with that which is more difficult, inability to obey the command to believe, evinced in resistance to and rejection of God's testimony concerning his Son,—a sin committed by the Jews,—is assumed by God to be the sin of all human beings, whether they lived before Christ's coming, or have lived since.—Still, however, the evidence of human nature being enmity to God, and nothing else, although most conclusive, is to a certain degree only *negative*. Something more was required to complete its *positive* character. Hence that exhibition of enmity to God, on the part of man, which stands last in order, and is now obtruded on our notice:—enmity which comes out in the shape of human beings in general rejecting salvation as a divine gift, and divinely revealed matter of fact. This, likewise, is assumed to be an exhibition of enmity on the part of all, from the beginning till the end of time; and all therefore are involved in its consequences. Here, the practical justification of Jehovah, in regard to those who lived in previous ages is, that as mankind had shewn themselves uniformly unable formerly to abstain from even the inferior manifestations of enmity, much less, had the opportunity been afforded, could they have abstained from exhibiting enmity, as it now appears, in its highest form and degree. If unable to comply with laws of prohibition and command, forms of divine manifestation in certain respects accommodated to human notions and inclinations, much less able must they have been, as much less able human beings now shew themselves to be, to comply with a form of manifestation which surpasses human conception, and stands opposed to human inclination altogether. The greatest manifestation of human enmity,—as is unquestionably now afforded in the fact of man-

kind generally imposing on God the character of a lawgiver, when in reality he is making himself known as a Saviour,—is thus also the most extensively *positive*, and thereby the crowning manifestation of human enmity. God having manifested man's enmity to himself in the case of an individual whose criminality involved all, justifies this his procedure, by shewing that greater enmity to himself was capable of being displayed by a whole nation, than Adam had evinced; and completes his vindication of himself, by bringing out, on the part of mankind generally, such an extent and perverseness of enmity to himself as otherwise it would have been impossible even to have dreamed of, and as sets the possibility of augmentation at defiance.

Briefly, the practical argument, of which I have been speaking, may be conceived of as thus put by Jehovah:—"Assuming human nature to be, what it actually is, the same in all; and assuming that what any human being placed under certain circumstances does, another human being placed under the same circumstances would do likewise; I assume the exhibition of enmity to myself on the part of a single individual, committed under circumstances favourable for the display of feelings of friendship, as an exhibition of enmity on the part of all.—Do you object to this? Then I strengthen the argument. I present to you a far greater exhibition of enmity to myself on the part of a nation, brought out under circumstances still more favourable for the display of friendship; and this, from the sameness of human nature, I again assume as an exhibition of that enmity on the part of all.—Do you still object to this? Then I carry out the argument to its greatest possible extent. I assume nothing. I present to you every adult human being, to whose ears my divine testimony comes, and in whom enmity is not subdued by the putting forth of my own almighty power, as chargeable with the greatest of all possible exhibi-

tions of enmity to myself, in preferring a mere conditional and contingent salvation which has no existence except in his own fancy, to a salvation freely, certainly, and presently bestowed, which is revealed by me as matter of fact. I thus present to you every adult human being, in a land called christian, who is unregenerate, as preferring his own fancies to my express declarations, and as thus insulting me to my face, by trampling my testimony under foot.—Such being the enormity, and such the universality of man's exhibition of enmity to me, what now have you to object? The evidence is complete. It is not now capable of being alleged by you, *the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge*. Jer. xxxi. 29. Every man now manifests his enmity personally, and therefore every man has now imputed to him his own transgression. What would you have more?"

The divine process being once thoroughly understood, how beautifully simple and appropriate does the whole appear to be.

Adam's exhibition of enmity to God, which consisted in his eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree, goes downwards in its application and operation throughout every succeeding age, till the end of time, being in reality an exhibition of the enmity which exists in all. The present exhibition of enmity, which consists in mankind in general rejecting salvation as God's gift, and as theirs personally, (God himself expressly revealing it to be so,) goes upwards in its application and operation, throughout all preceding ages, till the beginning of time, being in reality an exhibition of the enmity which exists in all. And just so, the intermediate exhibition of enmity on the part of the Jews, consisting in their crucifixion of the Lord Jesus, and subsequent rejection of him glorified, goes both upwards and downwards, backwards and forwards, in its application and operation, appearing as an exhibition

of the enmity which has existed in every man's nature from the first of time, and which will continue to exist in every man's nature till time shall be no more.

The reason of which is, that those various and progressive manifestations of enmity do not emanate from different natures, but from one and the same nature—from a nature common to all. Indicating what that nature is in one, or in a few, they indicate also what it is in every one, without a single exception. The exhibitions of the enmity are unquestionably progressive, the lowest being brought out first, and the highest last; but the principle of the enmity, rather the enmity itself, is from first to last in all the same. Enmity to God, as a principle of opposition both to law and to gospel, was, in its fullest extent, resident from the beginning in human nature. And had God's purposes and the plan of his procedure allowed, Adam, in paradise, was just as capable of having exhibited it in a higher form than he actually did,—just as capable of having disobeyed a divine command, and of having preferred a salvation which is conditional to one which is freely bestowed, as have been any of his posterity. Circumstances required that the enmity should be progressively developed; but the enmity itself has never varied, has always been one and the same in every human being, and might, had such been the divine pleasure, and had it been consistent with the divine purpose, have been manifested in its highest degree of operation, by any and every member of the human family, at any period previous to the close of time.

There is no form and extent of enmity to God, then, which human nature, at any and every stage of its existence, has not been capable of displaying. For human nature being the same in all, the phenomena which one human being has manifested, or will hereafter manifest, every other human being, if similarly circumstanced, might have manifested like-

wise. Divine wisdom, however, has so arranged that the manifestations of man's nature shall be progressive, and has postponed the highest and most decided* of these manifestations till the last. But at whatever period they occur, they are all manifestations of one and the same nature; and the nature of which they are manifestations is regarded and treated accordingly.

SECTION SECOND.

THE PUNISHMENT OF HUMAN NATURE IN ALL, AND IN EVERY AGE THE SAME. THE MANIFESTATIONS OF THAT PUNISHMENT PROGRESSIVE.

Secondly. Human nature is not in reality subjected to a more severe punishment at any one period of the world than at another.

Unquestionably, and this I have been endeavouring to shew, a higher punishment of human nature, in connexion with a higher exhibition of enmity on the part of that nature to God, than was formerly made known either in the case of Adam or in the case of the Jews, is now matter of divine manifestation. The process of enlightening the minds of the church in the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, and of shedding the love of God abroad in their hearts, is now seen by those who are themselves enlightened, to be not merely a process of new creation, but, in the very fact of its being so, also a process of destruction: of new creation in the heavenly image of the second Adam glorified; and to the degree to which that new creation extends, necessarily also

* *Prononcées, les plus prononcées*, would be, I conceive, the French phrase applicable to this.

of destruction of the earthly image of the first Adam in the mind of the individual. And when the enmity of man, now displayed in rejecting the gospel of a free salvation, and in the voluntary subjection of himself to a law, as emanating from God, which has no existence except in his own imagination, shall have been carried out to its fullest extent, the complete sweeping away and destruction of human beings, with this world as their appropriate place of abode, shall be the result. The destruction of the nature of man, then, in consequence of its being superseded by the divine nature, 1 Cor. xv. 54, is now being manifested gradually; and shall at last be manifested completely, as the highest punishment to which that nature is capable of being subjected.

But the progressive manifestation of punishment deserved, must be carefully distinguished from punishment actually inflicted. Here the same general features will be found presenting themselves, as in the subject to which we have just been adverting. Human nature, we have seen, has had its enmity to God progressively manifested,—the full extent of that enmity not having made its appearance all at once; and yet human nature was actually, essentially, and in principle, as much opposed to God in Adam and in the Jews, as it is now. Just so the punishment deserved by human nature has been progressively manifested, the full extent of its severity not appearing all at once; and yet the actual punishment of human nature, in Adam and in the Jews, has been the same as is the punishment of human nature now, and as will be fully shewn to be its punishment at the close of time.

We have seen human nature manifested as deserving to be punished, first, in the case of Adam, only with death; secondly, in the case of the Jews, additionally, with everlasting exclusion from the kingdom of heaven; and thirdly, in the case of mankind in general living since the end of the Mosaic dispensation, with complete and everlasting destruction.

To a superficial reader it may no doubt have appeared that our purpose was to represent Adam as having incurred the punishment of death, and nothing more ; to represent the Jews as, besides being punished with death, to have incurred the additional punishment of exclusion from the heavenly kingdom, but nothing more ; and to have intended to confine the still greater punishment of destruction of human nature, by its being swallowed up in the divine nature, only to those who have lived since the destruction of Jerusalem.

Now, however natural, such a conclusion could only be deduced from and made to rest on an entire misapprehension of our views and meaning.

The punishments in question have, without doubt, been progressively made known ; and this in connexion, indeed *pari passu* with progressive manifestations of human enmity. But all the punishments of *death*, *exclusion from the kingdom*, and *destruction* have been actually inflicted on human nature, and on all who have lived and died partakers merely of human nature, whatever may have been the age of the world in which it and they have existed, and whatever may have been the degree of knowledge of religion to which individuals have attained.

Human nature, in Adam, was manifested as no more than dying ; in the Jews, as, in addition to dying, no more than being excluded from the kingdom ; and only in the case of mankind in general living since the apostolic period, as having, in addition to the death and the exclusion spoken of, incurred complete and everlasting destruction. But the manifestation of the punishment which stood connected with the offence committed, was not in the case of either Adam or the Jews the measure of the punishment which was actually inflicted, and which they actually underwent. This we learn from now knowing the highest punishment which human nature deserves, and of which it is capable. Human nature

in Adam not only died, the highest manifestation of punishment which could be given at the time of the fall, but was also excluded from the heavenly kingdom, and destroyed, no less than human nature in the Jews and in ourselves. Human nature in the Jews not only died and was excluded from the kingdom, the highest manifestations of punishment which could at the period of Jerusalem's overthrow be given, but was also destroyed like ours. And thus, for us who live since that period, and during the progress of the third and last experiment already treated of, to die, to be excluded from the kingdom, and to be destroyed, in so far as human nature in us is concerned, although peculiarly and for the first time made known to us, is not on that account a series of punishments which we peculiarly and exclusively undergo: on the contrary, death, exclusion from the kingdom, and ultimate and complete destruction are in reality inflicted upon those who are merely human beings now, and on human nature in us, in common with all who have been merely human beings, and with human nature in them, from the period of man's original transgression.

Shall I express myself in a manner more intelligible if I say, that human nature in Adam, having been manifested as only violating a divine law of prohibition, was manifested as only deserving to die; that human nature in the Jews, having been manifested as committing the additional sin of disobeying a divine law of command, was manifested as deserving the additional punishment of exclusion from the kingdom of God; and that it is only in consequence of human nature being now manifested as chargeable with the highest of all forms of enmity to God, namely, that of resisting and rejecting the divine gift of life everlasting, and of preferring to this truth of God, its own falsehood of God being now a lawgiver, and of life everlasting being bestowed on condition of compliance with some law or laws issued by him, that it is now

manifested as deserving complete and everlasting destruction, the highest punishment which can be inflicted? But the nature which has manifested its enmity to God thus progressively, and which has had its desert of punishment thus progressively manifested, is the same in all. Its real enmity, although only progressively made known, is the same from first to last. What follows from this? Why certainly, that in reality and at bottom it should be punished after the same manner, and to the same extent in all. And so it is. All human beings die;* all human beings, as such, are excluded from the heavenly kingdom;† all human beings as such are, human nature itself is eternally destroyed. This world is the bourne of human nature. Human nature, as such, is confined to it, and cannot step beyond.

Thus do we become acquainted with the all-important fact of the distinction between the progressive manifestation of the punishment which man's enmity to God deserves, and the actual infliction of the same punishment of that enmity upon human nature in all. The full extent of the punishment merited by man's enmity was not made known until the third and last æra of man's existence upon earth had begun to run its course, and yet the full extent of that punishment has

* Enoch and Elijah form no exceptions to this. They died, or the earthly life ended as decidedly in them as in us, although after a somewhat different fashion from that in which it ends in us; to wit, after the fashion in which it shall end in those who are found alive on the earth at the close of time. Over and above which, human nature in them was as effectually excluded from the kingdom of heaven, and as completely destroyed, as in any others. It was by the immediate superinduction on them entirely of the divine nature, and thereby the immediate swallowing up in them of corruption and mortality or human nature, which involved the death and exclusion from the kingdom, as well as destruction of that nature, 1 Cor. xv. 54, that both entered into heaven.

† Flesh and blood, that is, human nature, neither as to mind nor body, can enter into and inherit the kingdom of God. John iii. 3. 5. Christ and his church live in heaven, not as descendants of Adam, 1 Cor. xv. 47, 48, but as being born again, through the resurrection from the dead. Ibid. 49; Eph. i. 17—23. Compare Acts xiii. 33—35, and Rom. i. 3, 4, with 2 Cor. v. 17; also read carefully Rom. viii. 5—11.

been undergone by all who have lived and died mere human beings. In maintaining the former, or the progressive manifestation of punishment, throughout this work, it has never been our intention to contradict the latter. While we maintain that death was the only punishment threatened to Adam, and that exclusion from the heavenly kingdom was the only additional punishment threatened to the Jews, we equally maintain, that human nature, as deserving in addition to these of complete destruction, has complete destruction as its portion and punishment inflicted upon it in the case of every human being *as such*: in Adam, and in the Jews, no less than in those who have lived since Judaism passed away.

To sum up what precedes :—

I do not maintain,

That human nature is more opposed to God in any one individual than in another, or at any one period of its history than at another. And

That it is more severely punished in any one individual, or at any one period of its history, than it is punished in other individuals and at other periods.

On the contrary, I maintain,

That the enmity to God of human nature in all is the same, and that the punishment of this enmity of human nature in all is the same.

Consistently with these fundamental principles, what I have been endeavouring to shew throughout this work has been,

That the full extent of man's opposition to God has been matter of progressive divine manifestation : appearing, first, in violating a divine law of prohibition ; secondly, in disobeying a divine law of command ; and thirdly, in presuming to set up, and in pretending to be able to obey a divine law enforcing the belief of the gospel, when no such divine law exists.

And that the full extent of the punishment due to man's enmity has been matter of progressive divine manifestation :

appearing, first, in his being deprived of natural life; secondly, in his exclusion from the heavenly kingdom; and thirdly, in his complete and everlasting destruction as a human being.

As to the manifestations of enmity to God, which, as observed, have been progressively brought out, of any and of every one of them, man's nature in all ages and under all circumstances has been capable; and, therefore, with enmity to God, not only in its inferior forms of manifestation, but likewise in the greatest possible degree in which it can be displayed, man's nature in all is justly chargeable.

Accordingly, not only to death, and to exclusion from the heavenly kingdom, but also to complete and everlasting destruction, is human nature, in every partaker of it, subjected.

SECTION THIRD.

THE MANIFESTATION OF THE DIVINE MERCY TO THE CHURCH,
AND ITS ENJOYMENT BY THE CHURCH IN TIME SUSCEPTIBLE
OF ALTERATION AND INCREASE AS BEING PROGRESSIVE.
ITS MANIFESTATION TO AND ENJOYMENT BY THE CHURCH
IN GLORY IN ALL THE SAME.

Closely connected with the subject of progression in the manifestation of man's enmity and man's punishment, and falling to be explained on principles which are perfectly analogous, is the progressive manifestation of the divine mercy, as distinguished from the actual enjoyment of that mercy.

To Adam mercy was displayed subsequently to the fall, merely in the form of forbearance and long-suffering, the lowest in which it is capable of being made known, and yet the highest which his then circumstances qualified him to

comprehend.* Sentence was not immediately executed upon him, just as it has not yet been executed upon his posterity as a whole. This delay in the infliction of the deserved punishment, coupled with and founded on the future work and triumph of the Great Deliverer, constituted the utmost extent to which God's loving-kindness was made known intelligibly to our sinful progenitor.

To believing Jews and Gentiles, during the period of the apostolic ministry, mercy was made known in the higher form of reconciliation. Human nature was then shewn not merely to have been spared, but, in a certain sense, and through a certain process, to have been brought into a state of friendship with God. The sacrifice of Christ was the ground-work and medium of this. Although believers were like others naturally God's enemies, yet to them was imparted the joyful discovery that they had been *reconciled to God by the death of his Son*. Rom. v. 10. Human nature, previously loaded with sin, became divinely righteous in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, and this, in the very act of his sacrificing or destroying it. See Philip. ii. 8, compared with 9. And Rom. x. 4, with John xix. 30. What then had been hateful in itself as enmity to him, God could now look upon with complacency, as *reconciled*, or rendered friendly to him *in the body of his Son's flesh, through death*. Colos. i. 22. Reconciliation was thus the form which the divine mercy assumed, and the highest which it could assume, to the minds of believing Jews and Gentiles, during the life-time and personal ministry of the apostles. 2 Cor. v. 18—20.

Ultimately, however, the divine mercy is now manifested to us in the still higher, indeed, in the highest form of salvation. We now see ourselves, transgressors although we be,

* I am not now speaking of the promise, Gen. iii. 15, which, although he *believed in*, he was incapable of *understanding*. I am now speaking of what, under his actually existing circumstances, he was capable of understanding.

not merely patiently borne with, and reconciled to God through the death of Christ, but, what is of far more importance, we now know that it is our present, glorious, and everlasting privilege, to be *saved by Christ's life*. Rom. v. 10. See also Rom. xiii. 11, Phil. ii. 12, iii. 7—14, Heb. x. 35—39. While, in dying, Jesus rendered human nature in himself perfectly righteous, thereby reconciling it, we perceive farther, that in rising again from the dead, he rescued, saved, or delivered human nature from its previous state of bondage to law, sin, and death; and this, not by continuing it as human nature, but by changing and elevating it to, as well as by clothing it with the divine nature. Mercy is now displayed, therefore, not merely as in the preceding æras of man's history, in prolonging our earthly lives, and in reconciling our earthly nature to God, in Christ's body offered on the accursed tree, but still farther in freely elevating us, as saved in him with an everlasting salvation, to the rank and level of what Christ now is, and throughout eternity will be. We now know that, even while sojourners in flesh, we are, in Jesus glorified, partakers of the earnest of the divine nature, 2 Peter i. 4; and that, when freed from the burden of flesh and mortality, we shall be in all respects what he himself now is. 1 Cor. xv. 49, Philip. iii. 21, 1 John iii. 2. Thus is the divine mercy, as shewing us who live in this third and last æra that we are saved ones, and this, by our being one with Jesus glorified, in consequence of which we partake with him in love, righteousness, and life everlasting, manifested to us in the highest form which it is capable of assuming.*

These three progressive manifestations of the divine mercy viz., long-suffering patience, reconciliation, and salvation, it will be found correspond to, and *pari passu* go along with

* Capable of assuming *to us*; the actual enjoyment of this, its highest form, being, as we shall afterwards see, ultimately extended *to all*.

those three progressive manifestations of human enmity, and their respective results, of which we have just been treating.

God's long-suffering patience and forbearance is the form in which, for the time being, mercy was revealed to Adam as connected with his one transgression, and the forfeiture of life which justly followed. Or, the revelation of divine mercy, in its lowest degree, stands connected with the exhibition of man's enmity to God, and God's punishment of man, in the lowest degree of which both were susceptible.

Again: God's reconciliation of the guilty to himself, through Christ's death, Rom. v. 10, is the form in which, for the time being, he revealed his mercy to believing Jews and Gentiles, in connexion with the sin of unbelief committed by the Jews in their national capacity, and exclusion from the heavenly kingdom as its result. Or, a higher revelation of divine mercy than that which had been afforded to Adam, stands connected with a higher manifestation of man's enmity, and God's punishment of that enmity, than was brought under his notice.

And, lastly, God's salvation of the guilty, or complete deliverance of them from the bondage of human nature and all its consequences, as a matter of fact, is the form in which mercy is now revealed to God's people, taken out of mankind in general; and this in connexion with the setting up of, and idolatrous attachment to laws of faith, and other commandments alleged to be divine, but which in reality have no higher origin than man's own imagination, and with the complete and everlasting destruction which is thereby, as its appropriate punishment, drawn down on human nature as a whole. Or mercy carried out to its highest degree is revealed by God in connexion with the highest manifestation of man's enmity and man's punishment.

Here, again, just as in the cases of human enmity, and the divine punishment of that enmity, it behoves us carefully

to distinguish between the degree of manifestation, for the time being, of divine mercy to the members of the church while upon earth, and its actual enjoyment by all of them in the heavenly state. The one is progressive, the other, not.

Adam, after the fall, had no higher experience of God, during his time state, than as long-suffering; and Jewish believers, no higher experience of God, during the apostolic ministry, than as reconciling them to himself by the death of his Son; it having been reserved for those members of the church who have lived since the passing away of the Mosaic dispensation to possess that high experience of God's mercy which is displayed in his saving them by Christ's life. Rom. v. 10.

A restricted enjoyment of the divine mercy is not, however, the portion of any member of the church of God, after the close of his connexion with this present world. The power of that mercy, in all its fulness, reaches backward to the beginning, no less than it reaches forward to the end of time. And, consequently, whatever may have been the different degrees of God's manifestation of his mercy to the members of his church while in flesh, all such differences disappear, when, as one with him and with one another, they come to be assembled in his immediate presence and heavenly kingdom.

Adam, it will then be found, is as decidedly a subject of divine reconciliation and salvation, as of long-suffering patience. Jewish believers, although while in flesh they knew themselves only as reconciled, will then be privileged to inherit the blessing of salvation also. And thus, although salvation as their portion be only manifested upon earth to the members of the church who have lived, live, and shall live from the period of Jerusalem's destruction, yet it shall as a matter of fact be enjoyed by them in heaven, not exclusively, but in common with all the saints who lived before Christ's first appearing. To us alone unquestionably, while we are in flesh, is made known what from Adam and Jewish believers previ-

ously to the passing away of the Mosaic economy, was as matter of experience, while they were in flesh, withheld. But with the termination of their connexion with this world, every distinction in the actual knowledge and enjoyment of God, on the part of the members of the church living in different ages ends. All in the presence of their heavenly Father, and clothed upon with the divine nature, possess the same knowledge, and the same enjoyments. Adam, feeble as his apprehensions of divine truth while he continued on earth necessarily were, stands in heaven on a footing of perfect equality with the remotest and most spiritually enlightened of his offspring.

So much for the different degrees of the actual understanding and enjoyment of the divine mercy, by members of the church living in different ages, as distinguished from the sameness of the understanding and enjoyment of that mercy by all of them, as partakers in common of the heavenly glory.

Let it, however, never be forgotten, nor let any of my readers suppose me to have overlooked or to wish to disguise the fact, that of their future full enjoyment of the divine mercy, Adam and the Jews had, although not by experience yet by faith, the anticipation. Heb. xi. 1. The prophecy of the bruising of the head of the serpent by the seed of the woman delivered to the former; Gen. iii. 15; and rites, ceremonies, and prophecies innumerable, before Christ came, running up into the declaration of the apostle, that as they had been reconciled by his death so should they also be saved by his life, Rom. v. 10, made to the latter; enabled both by faith to look forward to and triumph in the prospect of their enjoyment, in the better and heavenly country, of what it was never to be their privilege while on earth actually to attain to and possess. Heb. xi. 13, 14. 39, 40. They saw the promises, it is true, *afar off*. Ibid. 13. But *by faith they embraced*

them; Ibid.; and although destined *not without us to be made perfect*, or actually to enjoy them, Ibid. 40, still in our perfection, or actual enjoyment, they knew upon divine authority that they were to participate. Our peculiar privilege upon earth they knew was to be extended to all the members of the church in the heavenly kingdom; and what by faith they thus anticipated is accordingly in their blessed experience ultimately realised.

SECTION FOURTH.

RELATIVELY, GOD'S MANIFESTATION AS LOVE, FIRST IN CHRIST, SECONDLY IN THE CHURCH, AND THIRDLY IN THE WORLD, IS PROGRESSIVE. ABSOLUTELY, PROGRESSIVE MANIFESTATION DISAPPEARS, AND GOD IS SEEN IN THE FULNESS OF HIS MANIFESTATION AS WHAT HE REALLY, UNCHANGEABLY, AND EVERLASTINGLY IS.

At this point I might stop; and yet, were I to do so, the views suggested to me by my present subject would be most imperfectly, and to myself most unsatisfactorily brought out.

We have seen man's enmity to God exhibited at three successive stages, in connexion with, first, a single individual, Adam; secondly, a nation or body of individuals constituting an external church, the fleshly descendants of Abraham; and thirdly, mankind in general.

Gloriously does this, to the eye of him who is enlightened from above, suggest the threefold progress of the manifestation of Jehovah as love. 1 John iv. 8. 16. Sweet is it to the mind of him in whom the Spirit of Christ somewhat largely dwells, to be enabled to recognise in the subject of which I have been treating a progressive shadowy manifestation of what man is, in subserviency to a progressive sub-

stantial manifestation of what God is: and this as *man*, as *reigning mediator*, and as *all in all*.

First. As Adam a single individual was manifested in flesh sinning, so was Jesus Christ a single individual manifested in flesh righteous. Adam under the influence of enmity to God could not abstain from violating a single prohibition; Jesus under the influence of love to God abstained from violating every prohibition. But Jesus did more. He obeyed also every divine command. The law of faith addressed to him was fulfilled by him; for he lived by faith, and his righteousness was the righteousness of faith. Thus did he become *the end of the law for righteousness*. Romans x. 4.—So much for the first stage of divine manifestation. *God was manifest in flesh*, 1 Tim. iii. 16, as a single individual.

Secondly. As the Israelites, a body of individuals, evinced enmity to God more intense and virulent than Adam had done, so does the spiritual Israel, a body of individuals, evince love to God more intense and devoted than even our Lord himself while in flesh had an opportunity of doing. That is, as Jesus' heavenly church is one with him, and as its members only think and act spiritually under the influence of himself by means of the earnest of his divine nature dwelling in them, the love of Jesus himself appears in a higher form when thus operating in many, in his character as reigning mediator, than when he appeared as a single individual, acting and suffering in flesh. To render this advance in the manifestation of God as love a little more apparent, let a few observations be made:—Jesus as having been while in flesh *under law*, Gal. iv. 4, could evince love to God only by his own personal obedience, or in the character of a servant,* the immediate end of which was merely personal, or

* Δουλος, *slave*. Μορφην δούλου λαβών, *taking the form of a slave*, are the words employed in Phil. ii. 7.

the emancipation of himself by self-sacrifice from his then bondage state and condition. Phil. ii. 8, 9, Heb. xii. 2, &c. But Jesus as having by his resurrection and ascension been emancipated from all the bondage of his previous circumstances, Heb. ix. 26, Rom. vi. 9, and as now appearing not in the character of a servant but in that of a monarch, Acts ii. 33—36, Phil. ii. 9—11, is evincing love to God after a higher fashion than formerly; seeing that his love to God is no longer merely personal, but is exhibited in his giving to others to partake with himself in love, and thereby in reigning power. His church, set free by him in their hearts and consciences even now from law, sin, and death, by their having had the earnest of his heavenly and glorified mind superinduced upon them,—and set free ultimately from all the bondage of their Adamic nature, by being in body as well as in mind, entirely conformed to their glorified head,—enable him to exhibit love to God no longer as an individual, but in and through them as a body of individuals, Heb. ii. 11—13; and to evince this love, not in connexion with the old creation, which is enslaved by law, sin, and death, but as members of the new creation, and as having every principle that is merely human superseded by and swallowed up in the divine nature. 1 Cor. xv. 54, 2 Cor. v. 4. The church, as glorified along with its glorified Head, is not manifesting love as *restrained from evil*, which would imply that its nature was the unrighteous nature of the creature Adam, 1 Tim. i. 9—11; but is manifesting love as *constrained to good*, which, wherever it exists, displays the operation and influence of the righteous nature of the Creator, the Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. God, then, is now *manifest in Spirit*, 2 Cor. iii. 17, in the body of individuals; Rom. viii. 9; 1 Cor. xv. 48; 2 Cor. iv. 13, 14; and that principle of love which, evinced by Jesus personally, in the character of a servant, in obedience to law, contributed to his own personal salvation,

is now evinced by him in the character of a king, in which character, that is, as reigning mediator, he elevates others to his own heavenly rank and dignity, thereby contributing to the salvation of many. See John xiv. 3, 12, 19; xvii. 24—26.

Thirdly. As mankind in general, or the human race in the last stage of this present world's history, display enmity to God in the highest degree in which that enmity is capable of being displayed, so does God, as *all in all*, or in the last and highest stage of divine manifestation, display love in the highest degree in which that heavenly principle is capable of being displayed. Love at that æra appears, not in its means, but in its end; not in its progress, but in its consummation. All persons and things appear then made new, Rev. xxi. 5; or the nature of God, to the manifestation of which in all its fulness, every person, circumstance, and event is subservient, then appears embracing all, and assimilating all to itself.* And the reign of God as Christ or Mediator, and the manifestation of divine love through him and the church as one with him, are then seen to have been subordinate to the rendering of that reign ultimately effective in the manifestation of divine love to all, and the consequent necessary subjugation of all. Rom. viii. 19—23, 1 Cor. xv. 24—28, Heb. ii. 7—9.†

* Beautifully and profoundly, and not less scripturally, says Jeremiah White, in his "Restoration of all Things,"—"Love is all; and *God is love*. And love is a *Unity*, the most perfect unity, which is *all in one*. And it is a *variety*, all variety displayed in that unity, in most perfect excellence and beauty. Yea, love is a *trinity in unity*; this is involved in the very idea and nature of love, as we must here necessarily take it, in its utmost perfection, and its eternally triumphant act. In God, or love, as the *Unity*, there must be the eternal loving, or lover; the eternally loved, or beloved; and the eternal product or fruit of that love, or love in its manifestation; which, as it is brought forth within the bosom of its parent, *i. e.*, love derivative in the bosom of love original, which is infinite—cannot be excluded, or exist in a separate essence, but must abide for ever in the womb of its conception, and consequently react eternally in love upon its original."

† In this are realised some most important Old Testament types. Adam, and Eve who herself sprang from Adam, Gen. ii. 21, 22, Acts xvii. 26, became, by their earthly union, the parents of an innumerable offspring, naturally

Thus the enmity of man to God, exhibited in its highest degree in the last state of mankind upon earth, finds at once a parallel or counterpart, and a contrast in the manifestation of divine love, in its highest degree, in heaven. In God, as *all in all*, time and space, ages and worlds, creature nature, creature notions, creature feelings, and creature results, nay, even the previous manifestations of God as *man*, and as *reigning Mediator*, are swallowed up completely and for ever. And yet so swallowed up that, as complete and eternal manifestation of himself is essential to Jehovah,* so whatever had previously and otherwise appeared in an inferior, shadowy, and creaturely form, then appears in a form that is superior, substantial, and divine.

Will my readers pardon me if I now put them on their guard against a mistake into which they might otherwise fall; and this by another application of a principle which has

descended from them, and one with them. So Christ as reigning mediator, the antitype of Adam, and the church, as reigning with her husband and head, the antitype of Eve, the church herself being sprung from Christ, Eph. v. 23—32, Gal. iii. 29, Heb. ii. 13, 1 Peter i. 23, 1 Cor. xv. 48, become, by their heavenly union, the parents supernaturally of the whole mass of unregenerate ones, of whom Adam and Eve had previously been by natural generation the parents: all these being thus supernaturally descended from them, and one with them. And as the oneness of Adam and Eve with all their posterity is evinced by the fact of the whole human race, as inheriting their old nature, being dealt with by God after the same fashion as they themselves were; so is the oneness of Christ and his church with the unregenerate portion of mankind, as their posterity, evinced by the fact of the whole unregenerate portion of the human family, as being made to inherit their new and divine nature, being dealt with by God after the same fashion as they themselves are. In other words, as conformity to Adam and Eve naturally is, on the part of the rest of the human family, the result of being naturally descended from them, so is conformity to Christ and the church supernaturally, on the part of the rest of the human family, the result of being supernaturally descended from them. And as by natural seed human nature is transmitted by Adam, through Eve, to the remotest of his descendants; so by divine manifestation, or heavenly seed, 1 Peter i. 23, is the divine nature propagated by Christ glorified, through the spiritual Eve, the church, ultimately to the whole of the non-elect portion of the posterity of Adam. 1 Cor. xv. 49.

* 1 John i. 5. *God is light.*

already, in more than one instance, been obtruded on their notice ?

Undoubtedly, viewing divine manifestation as progressive, God is revealed, first, as man ; then as reigning mediator ; and lastly, as all in all. 1 Cor. xv. 20—28.

But no such differences exist when God is viewed absolutely, or as Jehovah ; that is, as the self-existent one,—the Being who is *without variableness, or the shadow of turning*. James i. 17. Then all progressive manifestation disappears. God as all in all, and this from everlasting to everlasting, solely in that case attracts our notice. His previous and subordinate manifestations of himself as man and reigning mediator, then vanish from our sight ; rather, previous and subordinate manifestations of himself are in that case altogether out of the question : for now, as in time past, and as in time to come, rather, as without reference to time at all, he appears the *I am* ;—the infinite Being, more correctly, the Being who, so far from being bounded himself, is the prescriber of bounds to all others ;—the Being whose essence and whose manifestation of himself as necessarily and inseparably connected with that essence, 1 John i. 5, are everlastingly and unchangeably the same. Job xxiii. 13, Psalm xc. 1, 2 ; Rom. xi. 36 ; Heb. xiii. 8 ; Rev. i. 4. 8.

Have my readers perceived the connexion subsisting between the views just stated, and views to which I had previously drawn their attention ? To aid any whose minds the analogy referred to may have escaped, I take leave to observe, that as although in the case of human beings the manifestation of their enmity to God has been progressive, yet the principle of that enmity, or the enmity itself, is in every human being, whether old or young, whether reputable or disreputable, whether Heathen, Turk, Jew, or nominal Christian, exactly and essentially the same ; so, although the manifestation of the love of God, or rather of God as love,

has been progressive, yet is love in God himself, or in God viewed as Jehovah,—the I am,—the all in all, and in his manifestation of himself as Jehovah, essentially, everlastingly, and unchangeably the same. *God is love.* 1 John iv. 8. 16.

SECTION FIFTH.

A VIEW OF THE PROGRESSIVE DESTRUCTION OF LAW, SIN,
AND DEATH.

The perfecting of my work seems to demand, on my part, the introduction of one topic more—and with that I conclude.

I wish to shew more fully and satisfactorily to my readers than I have yet been able to do, how it is that from the destruction of Jerusalem till the end of time there is no divine law of prohibition or command in existence; how this circumstance serves to account for phenomena of a religious kind now presented to our notice, as well as to throw light on previous parts of this work; and how, in connexion with this fact, another threefold progressive manifestation of God's dealings with man makes its appearance.

The three great enemies of man are, law, sin, and death. The first, as one of the two grand exciting causes of the enmity of man's mind; Rom. vii. 7—12; the second, as the actual display of that enmity; Gen. iii. 6, Rom. viii. 7; and the third, as its punishment. Gen. iii. 19; Rom. vi. 23. They all, as causes or effects, are connected with the drawing down of the righteous indignation of God upon man.

In Jesus as crucified descending into hades, and in his rising again from the dead, law, sin, and death were, in so far

as he himself personally was concerned, *actually* destroyed. And in so far as the church and the world are concerned, law, sin, and death were, in the three events just enumerated as having happened to our blessed Lord, *virtually* destroyed likewise.

In the conscience of every man who is born from above, law, sin, and death are, so far as the knowledge and nature of Christ glorified extend, destroyed also; being swallowed up, now in the earnest, and hereafter in the fulness of divine love, righteousness, and life. The love of God superseding law, the righteousness of God superseding sin, and the life of God superseding death by swallowing it up in victory. 1 Cor. xv. 54.

Not so, however, externally and manifestatively, and in so far as this world is concerned, are law, sin, and death destroyed. These enemies of man, looked at in the way in which I am about to bring them under notice, are seen to undergo a progressive destruction or annihilation. The fifteenth chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, from verse 20th to verse 28th, if consulted by the reader, and spiritually understood by him, will be found materially to assist him in the comprehension of what I am about to offer.

Besides the three æras, epochs, or periods of which I have already treated, three other æras, epochs, or periods, connected with the former, and yet distinct from them, are alluded to and marked out in scripture. The first runs from the beginning of the world till the close of the apostolic ministry, the perfecting of the volume of inspiration, and the destruction of Jerusalem. This period embraces the whole series of miraculous divine interpositions, of all kinds and for all purposes. The second runs from the close of the one just alluded to till the end of time and of this present world. During this period, no miracles exist, or can exist; every thing proceeding according to fixed general principles, whether

natural or spiritual. The third runs from the end of time till the consummation of all things.

I.—The first of these periods may be denominated, because it really is, the period of divine law. As we have seen in the preceding part of this work, it embraces two subordinate æras : that of the existence of the law of prohibition, addressed to Adam ; and that of the existence of the law of command or faith, which came into operation immediately after the fall, and which was addressed especially to Abraham and his fleshly descendants. Divine law in both these forms was, as we have seen, issued for the express purpose of bringing out and evincing man's utter inability to comply with it in either. Adam's one transgression having proved man to be unable to abstain from violating the former, and having terminated the paradisaical state ; and the crucifixion of *the Lord of Glory*, followed up by disobedience to the command to believe on him as the Messiah,—a command which, through the instrumentality of the apostles, had been addressed to the Jews by Jesus risen and ascended to his Father's right hand,—having proved man to be equally unable to yield obedience to the latter, and having terminated the existence of the Mosaic dispensation and earthly church ; divine law, with every thing of the nature of obligation on the part of man to obey such law, came to an end and passed away. *Magnified and made honourable* divine law had been, by the righteousness of the Son of God, manifest in flesh ; Isaiah xlii. 21 ; and after having complied with its requirements in every respect previously, he, in that complete obedience to it which he rendered in the sacrifice of himself, became the end of it. Rom. x. 4 ; Philip. ii. 8, 9. Thus, *one jot or one tittle did in no wise pass from the law*, all having, in Jesus Christ, its subject and substance, been *fulfilled*. Matt. v. 18. After our Lord's complete obedience of faith, all that remained was merely to bring out the exhibition of the complete dis-

obedience of unbelief on the part of the earthly church, whose members were his kinsmen according to the flesh. This was done accordingly. And with complete obedience to divine law on the part of the Creator, followed by complete disobedience to it on the part of the creature, the existence and obligation of that law ceased for ever. This occurred at or about the time when Jerusalem was destroyed. Matters are in this way brought down to the termination of the periods treated of in the first and second parts of my present work.

II.—The second of the periods to which I am now alluding may be denominated, because it really is, the period of sin. It runs on from the close of the epoch just spoken of, till the end of time. During the last eighteen hundred years, mankind have been passing through it. At present, they are so; and they shall continue to be so while this present world lasts. The third and last part of my present work treats of this second period.

Upon many whose minds are but superficially instructed in divine truth,—and of how few dare we affirm that their spiritual education is more than superficial?—it may have a startling effect to speak of the present æra or period as that of sin. “What!” say they. “Instead of this being the period of sin, is it not rather the period of sin being taken away? Nay, if divine law be at an end, as you maintain that it is, how by any possibility can sin exist?” Rom. iv. 15; 1 John iii. 4.

Nothing, however, can be conceived more true, and consequently more agreeable to scripture, than the proposition which I now proceed to lay down, and offer to maintain, viz.,

There is now no divine law in existence; there has been none since the destruction of Jerusalem, and there will be none till the end of time. And yet, the age, æra, or period now running on is emphatically the age, æra, or period of sin.

A concession here falls to be made, that to the members of the church this is not the period of sin, but of sin being taken away, through its being swallowed up in the divine righteousness. From this, however, the conclusion is not what fleshly religionists would deduce from it.—Perhaps I shall be best understood by proceeding to open up the subject at some length.

Whenever the truth as it is in Jesus comes to be realized in the heart and conscience of any elect child of Adam, during this present æra,—which it is in every one the moment he is born from above,—such an one finding that he is no longer *under law*, but *under grace*, or, in other words, finding that law is ended by being swallowed up in divine love, finds also that sin is ended by being swallowed up in divine righteousness. Thenceforward he is no longer merely *restrained* from evil by law, 1 Tim. i. 9, as if a partaker of human nature merely he would be, but is *constrained* to good by love, 2 Cor. v. 14, 15, in consequence of being a partaker of the divine nature; 2 Peter i. 4; and as not being under law, Róm. vi. 14, but born again of him who is love, 1 Peter i. 23, he sinneth not. 1 John iii. 8. Being one with Christ glorified in love, righteousness, and life, law, sin, and death are to him, *as thus one with Christ*, thenceforward unknown. The reason of which is, that law, sin, and death, which are mere shadowy* and human principles, are in his conscience, as made new and conformed to that of the glorified Redeemer,

* See Rom. viii. 20. *Vain* and *shadowy* are synonymous terms. *Vanity* includes human nature, with all the effects and consequences of human nature. The 39th Psalm may be consulted with advantage in reference to this subject. Our blessed Lord clothed himself, for a time, with the vain or shadowy nature of man, and in him human nature was *in its best estate*. But even in him it was *altogether vanity*. He got rid of it by his death, and by his resurrection from the dead; in which latter event he swallowed up the vain in the substantial. So man, subjected for a time to vanity, or human nature with all its adjuncts and consequences, is delivered ultimately from this state of bondage, by being clothed upon with the substantial nature of the glorified Son of God. 1 Cor. xv. 54.

swallowed up in love, righteousness, and life everlasting, principles which are substantial and divine.

Still, while he continues in flesh, the child of God is a descendant of Adam, and, as clothed with the Adamic nature, is the proper subject of law, sin, and death. Here the scriptural doctrines of the necessary opposition of two natures in the believer immediately makes its appearance. Gal. v. 17; Rom vii. 14—25. Such an one, while in the body, if one with Jesus glorified, is also one with earthly Adam. As one with the glorified Son of God, he knows nothing of law or sin, being raised above both, and being influenced by divine, not by human principles; by spirit, not by flesh. Rom. vi. 14. 18. 22. But, as still one with Adam, he is the subject of law and sin; and accordingly, viewed under this latter aspect, that principle of love which is to him as one with glorious Christ freedom from all law, is in him as one with Adam the most severe, stringent, and restraining of all laws;* and that principle of righteousness which is to him as one with glorified Christ freedom from all sin, is in him as one with Adam found continually manifesting the existence and operation of vile, earthly, and corrupt principles and propensities. Rom. vii. 13, 14, 23. The believer, then, has nothing to do with law and sin, as one with Christ Jesus glorified, being set free completely and for ever from them, and raised above them, in his divine Head; nay, having the experience, as one with Christ, of their being swallowed up in his conscience in divine love and divine righteousness: but his very oneness with Jesus, which is in

* See James i. 25. Love is *the law of liberty*, being liberty, or freedom, as implying the possession of the divine nature; and a law, as implying the restraint of human nature. Perhaps, *a law*, as operating upon the mind with a sweetly powerful and efficacious influence. See Rom. viii. 2. I am warranted in going farther than merely saying that love, as a law, restrains human nature; love actually tends towards, and ends in the destruction, by means of the new creation, of human nature. Gal. v. 24; Rom. vii. 24, 25. Also 2 Cor. v. 17.

itself freedom, perfect freedom from law and sin, in consequence of his being a partaker of the divine nature, John viii. 34—36, 2 Peter i. 4, becomes to him, as still one with Adam, the means of enforcing upon him, as well as of shewing him that he is, *in that capacity*, the slave of both. Rom. vii. 13—25; Gal. v. 17. The divine nature is liberty in itself; but it is the imposition of the severest and most destructive of all laws upon human nature. James i. 25; Gal. v. 24; Rom. vi. 18—22; xii. 1. No wonder, then, if human nature shrink back from, and set itself in an attitude of opposition to the divine nature. Gal. v. 17.

This setting of the believer free from law and sin, as well as from death, is accomplished in his conscience by means of the language of scripture assuming an aspect, and becoming invested with a power, to him altogether new. Formerly the scriptures appeared to him to be a mere series of prohibitions or commands, by a due compliance with which he was in one way or another to escape the divine wrath, and earn for himself the divine favour. Now these same scriptures are experienced by him, in proportion as their divine meaning is introduced into and takes hold of his conscience, to be in him connected with the formation of an entirely new principle. As God said, *Let there be light*, and there was light; so is he made to experience, in consequence of God having addressed to him his own word, that his conscience is of necessity enlightened and new-created. Law is now and henceforward out of the question. The scriptures, he now finds, are imposing upon him neither prohibitions nor commands. They are urging him to nothing, either in the shape of abstinence from evil, or performance of good, in order to obtain the divine favour. Their meaning having been to a certain degree imparted to him, and now residing in him as the earnest of a principle of divine light and divine love, he finds that, like every other principle whatever that may be,

this meaning is exerting over him a sweet but powerfully efficacious influence. Being now the servant of love, he has of necessity *become* thereby also *the servant of righteousness*. Rom. vi. 18 ; viii. 4. And thus he who is made the recipient of divine principle, through God in the scriptures personally addressing him, Matt. xiii. 9, Rev. xiii. 9, besides finding, as a matter of fact, that as one with Christ glorified, he is set free from the bondage of law, Rom. vii. 4, finds also that, in virtue of the same divine relation, the bondage of sin and death has, as to him, passed away for ever. John viii. 36 ; 1 John iii. 6—8 ; Gal. ii. 20.

Not so, however, with the unregenerate, or great majority of the human race.

During the whole period which elapses from the destruction of Jerusalem till the end of time, or what we are now considering as the second period,—the third of the present work,—there is no divine law in existence: God imposing no law upon man, over and above the law of his nature. And this, because Jesus personally in his death became *the end of the law for righteousness* ; Rom. x. 4 ; and because Jesus, who was one naturally with the earthly church, and as such was subjected to law, dissolved that relationship, and abolished law altogether, when the members of that church, by disobeying the law of faith, had drawn down upon themselves *everlasting exclusion from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power*. 2 Thess. i. 9. These facts, mankind in general, whether religious or irreligious, have no conception of. Hence the scriptures present to their minds the aspect of a law, or series of laws, addressed to them by the Almighty. Evils, they suppose it to be the object of the Bible to prohibit ; obedience, they suppose it to be the object of that book to enforce. That God's object is, through the instrumentality of the scriptures, to supersede law, whether prohibitory or imperative, and this by the illu-

mination and new creation of his church, and by the implantation in their minds thereby of the divine and spiritual principle of love, it never enters into the heads of such persons to dream of. It is in connexion with this ignorance on the part of mankind in general of the fact of divine law having passed away, through having received its fulfilment in Christ, and in the punishment of the Jews, that the second and present æra—the æra of which we are speaking—is properly and emphatically the æra of *sin*.

This it is,

1. Unquestionably, in consequence of the fact that, till time ends, human nature continues to exist. Divine law has passed away, but human nature has not passed away. Human nature, however, is the nature of sin. Briefly, but correctly, indeed, that nature may be denominated sin itself. Rom. vii. 7—14. Therefore, until human nature is brought to an end—and human nature will not end while this world lasts—sin, as essential to human nature,—as the very principle of human nature, Rom. viii. 7,—cannot itself be brought to an end. Our Lord took hold of sin, for the purpose of getting rid of it, by taking hold, in the womb of the virgin, of the nature to which sin attached; and, although sinless himself, Heb. iv. 15, nay, although the purifier and perfecter of human nature in himself, John viii. 46, Rom viii. 3, he nevertheless could only get rid of sin, *as resting upon him*,* by the sacrifice or destruction of his pure and spotless humanity. Heb. ix. 26. Just so, sin is so inseparably connected with human nature, in every descendant of Adam, that only with the termination of human nature, can sin itself terminate.

2. This present period, however, is properly the æra or period of sin, because never until it began, and only as it has progressed, had and has had the nature of man an opportunity

* Isaiah liii. throughout. 1 Peter ii. 24. See also Psalm li.

of fully developing its sinful character and propensities, an opportunity of which it has in every age been greedily availing itself.

Formerly, man was subject to the restraint of the divine law of prohibition, or he had imposed upon him the divine law of command. And the observance of both was enforced by frequent miraculous interpositions on the part of Jehovah. Under such circumstances, reined in as he thus was to a certain degree, man could not exhibit thoroughly the tendencies and propensities of his nature. But now that the restraints and injunctions of divine law, together with the immediate miraculous sanctions by which compliance with them was from time to time enforced, have equally and completely been withdrawn, human nature has full and unfettered scope to shew what it is.

And this it actually does.

Unbridled in any respect by the dread of immediate and miraculous punishments inflicted by Deity, man, in a way and to an extent greater than in the preceding ages of the world he did, now manifests his enmity to God. *Because sentence against their evil works is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.* Eccles. viii. 11. And because the long announced second coming of the Lord in its fulness is delayed, *scoffers, walking after their own lusts*, abound and increase in insolence and daring impiety. 2 Peter iii. 3, 4. Some specimens of this have been given in the fourth chapter of the third part of the present work. The grand exhibition of man's enmity, or sinfulness now, however, is in reference to the gospel. Formerly, he refused obedience to God's law, Rom. viii. 7; now he shews himself uniformly and necessarily opposed to a passive reception of and acquiescence in the revealed fact of God's freely bestowing life everlasting. Rom. xi. 1—5. And as time rolls on, his deep-rooted enmity to

God, the character of sin as now in a peculiar sense that of his nature, by the resistance which it gives to gospel, will go on more and more developing itself.

No doubt, in countries called Christian, and among religious communities especially, the tone and principles of morals are in many respects higher than they are elsewhere, and than they were before the introduction of christianity. This is by means of a mistake,—a most useful one, in a secular point of view, it must be admitted,—on the part of the countries and communities in question. Themselves they suppose to be, in certain respects, situated as Israel of old was. And, proceeding on this principle, laws which were addressed by God to Israel, they suppose to be addressed likewise to them. Now these different hypotheses are based on falsehood. There is now no nation and no community occupying the place of Israel of old. And although God did impose laws upon Israel formerly, or rather, although through Israel, he formerly imposed laws on Israel's great and glorious Head, Gal. iii. 19, the Holy Scriptures have now a totally different object, or rather, the God from whom the Holy Scriptures have emanated, and who speaks in them, has now a totally different object from that of imposing laws upon mankind. God's purpose now,—a purpose which like every other entertained by him he carries into effect,—is through the scriptures spiritually to enlighten the members of his church, and thereby to implant in their hearts and understandings the earnest of divine principle; not to enforce codes of morals, or laws of any description upon man. But of this purpose of God mankind naturally are ignorant. Hence they suppose him to be a lawgiver to them, as he was to the Jews of old. Foolish and infatuated that they are! It is not God who is imposing laws, but they themselves who, under the influence of their fleshly minds, are turning the scriptures, which are spiritual, Rom. vii. 14, John vi. 63, and which are in the

hands of God himself the means of conveying the principle of life everlasting into the minds of the members of the church, John xvii. 3, into mere codes of morals, intended for the regulation and restraint of the world. Thus perverting the scriptures, it is they who are legislating for themselves, not God who is legislating for them. The laws imposed, are laws imposed by themselves. There at present exists no other and no higher law of God, than the law of man's own nature ; and where only fleshly mind exists, conscience, the highest faculty of that nature, of necessity takes the scriptures, and according to the measure of its fleshly understanding, converts their language into a series of laws which it imposes on itself. Hence the great diversity of opinion as to the laws which God is supposed to enforce, which obtains in the world, as well as among the different tribes and classes of religionists. What is divine law to one, is not divine law to another. With a Papist, it is the law of God now to hear Popes, Cardinals, and General Councils ; with Protestants, to turn a deaf ear to them. With Papists, to believe in transubstantiation ; with Protestants, to reject it. With Pædobaptists, to be convinced of the efficacy of infant sprinkling ; with Baptists, to regard it as a divine command to practise only the immersion of adults. And so, with respect to the nature of ordinary morality, and the extent of its obligations, when particulars come to be inquired into. Here a similar difference of opinion will be found to prevail.* Such, then, is the diversity as to what actually constitutes divine law, manifesting itself among mankind in general, who nevertheless are agreed in this, that divine law, in one form or another, exists.—Wonderful indeed would it be, if individuals and bodies of individuals could, as to what constitutes divine law, be at one among themselves. Not less wonderful than

* Compare Paley with Jonathan Dimond.

if, after the confusion of tongues at Babel, there had been agreement among the builders. For, in reality, God is now imposing no laws whatever upon mankind. And therefore having no divine guide in this matter, each man interprets what he conceives to be divine law, according to the inherent peculiarities of his own mind,* or of the sect or party with which he may happen to be connected.† Natural conscience, a mere faculty of the fleshly mind, is, it is true, getting enlightened upon its own principles, through the medium of the scriptures understood as a divine law, or series of divine laws. But it is merely natural conscience which under such circumstances is enlightened. And the whole of its illumination, such as it is, consists in a complete perversion, on its part, of the meaning and object of God's word. Fleshly mind is, in its form of natural conscience, representing him as a lawgiver, who in reality is revealed in his word as a saviour. Thus, then, I do not dispute the fact, that a species of light is introduced into the fleshly mind and conscience of man, by means of the scriptures being understood by him in the sense of issuing and enforcing law—a light which of course increases, as the code of laws thus supposed to be issued and enforced enlarges in the number, variety, and stringency of its requisitions. But *the light* in question being false, as being the result of a view which stands diametrically opposed to the true object aimed at by God through the instrumentality of the scriptures, or as supposing God to be enforcing a code of morals, or laws of some other description, when in reality he is presenting Christ to our minds as the great law-fulfiller and our righteousness, is *darkness*; and as, instead of leading to God, in proportion as it increases, its tendency is to strengthen and perpetuate man's enmity to God, by urging him more and

* Bacon's *idola specús*.

† Bacon's *idola theatri*.—See the *Novum Organum*.

more to self-righteous efforts to become his own saviour, *how great is that darkness!* Matt. vi. 23.

From the destruction of Jerusalem till the end of time, is then the æra or period of sin, inasmuch as human nature, the sinful nature, continues in existence during the whole period of its running on; and inasmuch as human nature is, by means of the removal of all miraculous restraint, and all fear of miraculously-inflicted punishment, permitted to develop itself as the sinful nature, to a vastly greater extent than previously it had the opportunity of doing.

This, however, is merely to state the matter negatively; for positively this is the period of sin, inasmuch as man now is not opposing God's law, but God's gospel. His hatred is now pointed directly against, not law, but love. He is not now forfeiting previously enjoyed natural blessings, or coming short of conditionally offered spiritual ones, but is trampling under foot the grace of God,—is spurning from him spiritual and heavenly blessings which God, in the riches of his mercy, without reference to any conditions whatever, hath seen meet actually to bestow upon him. The force of man's enmity "can no further go." Here sin not only exists, but absolutely revels and triumphs.

Sin now appears, not in breaking God's law of prohibition, or in refusing obedience to God's law of command, the forms to which previously to Jerusalem's destruction it assumed, 1 John iii. 4, for law has completely passed away; but it appears in making God a liar, by declaring that to be false, which God declares to be true, 1 John v. 10, by representing the gospel as a law, when it is the announcement of a blessing which is freely bestowed, Acts xiii. 39, Rom. vi. 23, and by preferring to continue the slaves of sin, to recognizing ourselves as the freedmen of him who hath swallowed up sin in his own divine righteousness. Rom. vi. 11.

Sin, properly speaking, however, has reference to law, as being the transgression of it. 1 John iii. 4.

Understanding this, we are guided to a clear and full understanding of the reason why, although divine law at the period of Jerusalem's destruction passed away, by having then been fulfilled, the present is nevertheless emphatically the period of sin. That reason is, the irrepressible tendency of man's fleshly mind to regard divine law as still existing, to regard itself as still subject to it, and to heap up upon itself consequently a mass of evils or transgressions to which the breach of imaginary divine prohibitions and commands of necessity gives origin.

And sin, in its highest state of manifestation, as during the present æra, is thus man, in God's name, but in opposition to God, imposing laws or conditions of life everlasting on himself, which he is unable to obey; and thus man, by legislating for himself, and presuming to claim obedience to himself, and condemning by himself, as if he were God, being guilty in its highest and most blasphemous form of idolatry.

1. Men, and bodies of men, in opposition to God's own express and reiterated declarations to the contrary,* insist on regarding him themselves, and on presenting him to others, as a lawgiver.

Neither individuals, nor bodies of individuals, can help thus acting. The very constitution of their minds, combined with their education, subjects them to the necessity of taking a conditional view of divine things; that is, to the necessity to regarding the enjoyment of divine benefits as being suspended on abstinence from disobedience, or the practise of obedience, on the part of the creature. Hence, as an issuer and enforcer of law, in one shape or another, God is of necessity regarded by them. But God is not now a lawgiver. Why, what then must happen? Fleshly mind, unable to conceive of him in any other or higher character than as a

* Jer. xxxi. 31—34; Heb. viii. 8—12; 1 John v. 11, &c., &c.

lawgiver, must represent him to itself and to others, as being what in reality he is not. Accordingly upon examination we find that this is its exact and uniform procedure.

By Roman Catholics he is regarded as the lawgiver, in obedience to whom has been set up what they are pleased to denominate the church. A lawgiver also he is, most obviously, in the estimation of those who, in obedience to him, as they allege, have given birth to Protestant establishments of religion. And so he is to every sect of Dissenters, whether larger or smaller. They are obeying divine law, they say, in meeting together, in observing ordinances, and in attending to discipline. The pettiest conventicle, forsooth, owes its origin, if its supporters are to be credited, to a desire on their part to yield obedience to a divine command.

And then, all such bodies of individuals, as well as the individuals themselves of whom they are composed, proceeding still farther upon the same principle, in every circumstance connected with their various associations represent God as a lawgiver, and themselves as under an obligation to obey him in that capacity. In alleged obedience to him, they have respectively their priests, clergy, ministers, or pastors. In alleged obedience to him, to these separated and venerated personages the laity pay a deference greater or smaller, according to circumstances. As regards these priests, clergy, ministers, or pastors themselves, they have it for their business to enforce, in one way or another, and to a greater or less extent, what they conceive to be, and what by them are denominated divine laws. Romish priests, and all who would fain be supposed to possess their rank and powers, enforce upon those who acknowledge their divine mission the necessity of yielding implicit obedience to them, as invested with the authority, and wielding the terrors, of the Most High. Protestant clergy, with the exception of the Puseyite party, are obliged to proceed with a little more caution. If

careless, and opposed to what is denominated evangelical religion, they content themselves with urging, as from God himself, the claims of ordinary morality. If religious after a fleshly fashion, they enforce upon those whom they call sinners the duty of instantly and zealously obeying the laws to repent and believe, which they represent God himself as addressing to such parties through their instrumentality. And upon the class of believers or saints, (such in their estimation,) they are continually engaged in enforcing, as divine laws which such persons are called on to obey, such abstinences from evil, and such endeavours after perfection, as have approved themselves to their own understandings. Thus, in professedly maintaining the character of God as a lawgiver, (a character the very opposite of that in which he is now revealed in Jesus glorified,) do the clergy of all denominations contrive to maintain their own credit, influence, and authority likewise. All, all is law, and divine law too, as it issues from their consecrated lips. Even divine promises, however freely they may be proclaimed by God himself,* the clergy continue to pervert, by announcing them in the form of laws: that is, instead of pointing the attention of the mind to the fact that in Christ Jesus such promises are actually enjoyed, they continue to represent the enjoyment of them as dependent on the fulfilment by the creature of some condition or conditions which God hath seen meet to annex to them.

Now are such representations of God in any way, and to any degree whatever correct? No, certainly. He is now issuing no laws at all. He is not now even proposing the enjoyment of promises conditionally. So far from now acting the part of a lawgiver, he is now solely and exclusively, through the medium of the scriptures, revealing himself as

* Such, for instance, as that quoted, Gal. iii. 8.

what he is, the Saviour. Isaiah xlv. 22—25; Rom. v. 10; Philip. ii. 6—11.

Who, then, is the divine lawgiver of the fleshly mind, and especially of the fleshly-minded religionists?

He is the mere creature of their own imaginations.—An idol, See 1 John v. 20.

This leads me to observe, that

2. Men, religious and irreligious, thus agreeing to represent God as now a lawgiver, that is, agreeing to set up as God a being who, as having no existence except in their own minds, is an idol, are of course in all their acts of pretended worship, and pretended obedience, guilty of idolatry.

Not of the gross idolatry of Paganism, certainly. Nor of the somewhat more refined idolatry of the Jews, displayed in worshipping institutions which really had a divine origin, in preference to worshipping him from whom these institutions emanated. Isaiah lxv. 2—5. But of an idolatry still more refined, and still more deadly, than that of either, namely, the direct worship of SELF, assuming to issue prohibitions, and enforce commands, the origin of which man has the insolence and blasphemy to ascribe to God.

God is now issuing no laws; for it is the object and glory of God now, through the instrumentality of the scriptures, to reveal himself as what he is, their God and Saviour, to the members of his church, and thereby to implant in them the principle of life everlasting. But man, in the name of God, is issuing laws of a great variety of kinds. And as these laws issue from man, not from God, man in obeying, or trying to obey them, is yielding obedience to self, and not to God.* Self is thus the God, or idol, of man's mind at

* Read carefully Matt. iv. 8—10, and then consider what a complete contrast to the procedure of our Lord would have been that of mere man, if placed in similar circumstances. Perhaps it may occur to some of the more intelligent and spiritually enlightened of my readers, that, among the other purposes to

present; and the worship of self, rendered in the way of obedience real or pretended to the laws imposed by self, as if they were laws of God, is the form of idolatry by which the present æra is distinguished.

But idolatry, whatever form it may have assumed, has ever been the most grievous and offensive of all sins. As such, it was visited with the severest punishments, in the case of the nations of Canaan, and of other heathens. As such, whether exhibited in the worshipping of the idols of neighbouring countries, or of their own divinely originated institutions, it drew down still more awful judgments on the descendants of Abraham according to the flesh. And as such, when exhibited now in the converting of a scheme of grace into a scheme of works; of God the Saviour, into an idol of a lawgiver,—the highest form which human idolatry

which the narrative is subservient, in the three temptations of the Lord Jesus, and their results, as they are recorded, Matt. iv. 1—10, it may have been God's intention to contrast Christ's conduct, 1st, with that of Adam—the one having at once refused to comply with the suggestions of the tempter to supply himself with food, and the other having, at the instigation of that foe of God and man, immediately eaten; 2dly, with that of the Jews—the one having unhesitatingly believed every word that God had spoken, and refused to draw inferences of his own from divine statements, the others having just as unhesitatingly made void God's command to believe by their own carnal reasonings; (ἐν τοῖς διαλογισμοῖς αὐτῶν, Rom. i. 21;) and 3dly, with that of mankind in general—the one having worshipped and served God exclusively, although by so doing he necessarily required to sacrifice self, the others being worshippers and obeyers of self, although thereby necessarily to the exclusion of all regard and worship of the living and true God. In other words, in the result of the three temptations addressed to our blessed Lord, we see him, in the first place, opposing and overcoming *the lust* or tendency of *the flesh*, or sensual appetite, to which Adam yielded; Matt. iv. 3, 4; in the second place, opposing and overcoming *the lust of the eye*, or the disposition to prefer human intellect and its conclusions to the commands of God, to which the Jews yielded; Ibid. 5—7; and in the third place, opposing and overcoming *the pride of life*, or that intense and exclusive love of self which is the highest characteristic of man's fleshly nature,—self being the principle to which, in the form of fleshly conscience dictating terms of salvation and the necessity of compliance with them, in opposition to the glorious gospel manifesting God as love and proclaiming salvation as free, unregenerate men, nominally professing Christianity, are now constantly yielding obedience. Ibid. 8—10. See 1 John ii. 16.

can assume ;—it exposes those who are chargeable with it to the undergoing of the divine vengeance in the severest and most awful form in which that vengeance is capable of being inflicted.

This last form of idolatry is sin carried out to the highest degree. Sin, indeed, in a sense the most emphatic, as if there never had been, and as if there never could be, any other. It is the principle of enmity on the part of man to God, embodied and concentrated. It violates no existing divine law of prohibition. It disobeys no existing divine law of command. But it is the setting up of the very nature of man himself, in opposition to, nay, in supremacy over, the nature of God. And it does this by assigning to God a character the very opposite of that in which he is now revealing himself, and by acting upon the principle of the character thus arbitrarily assigned to him by man being his true one : the character thus assigned to God being actually the character of man or self ; and man in thus assigning to God his own character, a character which is the opposite of that of God, of necessity trampling the real character of God under foot.

Well, then, fleshly mind now shews its thorough enmity to God, or the thorough sinfulness of its nature, by putting upon God the character of a lawgiver, a character which, as now revealed in Christ glorified, he repudiates and rejects with abhorrence ; and by pretending that, in its attempt to obey this creature of its own imagination, it is actually honouring *the living and the true God*. This, again, springs from the fact, that man, although now subject to no positive divine law, is still subject to the law of his nature ; that fleshly conscience, a principle which has to do with law, and with obedience or disobedience to it, is the highest principle of his nature ; and that the irrepressible tendency of fleshly conscience is to invest itself with the attributes of divine

sovereignty, and act as God,* in which capacity it legislates for itself and others, approving or condemning as the laws which are issued by itself are supposed to be either obeyed or violated. Rom. ii. 14, 15. In this capacity it is that conscience, seizing upon what were once laws of God, presumes to re-issue them in its own name; or rather, presumes to re-issue them as if they were still laws of God: they having as divine laws passed away through having received their accomplishment, Matt. v. 18, Rom. x. 4, and having now consequently no higher authority than that which the conscience of man itself can give them. 1 Tim. i. 6, 7. In opposition to the procedure of man's conscience in this respect, observe what is the procedure of God himself. God's declaration concerning himself is, *I am the Saviour*; Isaiah xlv. 21; John xii. 32; Rom. iii. 24; Ibid. v. 10; 1 Cor. xv. 22; that is, "I bestow eternal life freely upon the guilty,—bestow it without any reference whatever to conditions performed or to be performed by them,—bestow it, not according to works of righteousness which they have done, or may do." Titus iii. 5. "No," says man. "Thou art a saviour, but thou art so *conditionally*. Thou proposest certain terms of salvation to be fulfilled by us creatures; and knowing that we cannot inherit that blessing without the fulfilment of them, we are eagerly and anxiously striving, by our efforts to attain to faith and repentance, to entitle ourselves to it." Can any insult to God be conceived greater than this? God called a liar to his face! And yet, with this daring insolence every professor of religion, whether evangelical or otherwise, to whom the fact of his own personal salvation in Jesus Christ has not been opened up by the Holy Ghost, is clearly chargeable. In this way, as resisting gospel,—as trampling under

* *The man of sin opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.* 2 Thess. ii. 4.

the feet of his fleshly and conditional notions the fact of his own actual salvation in Christ,—as making that a law which is in reality merely the divine announcement of this fact,—does he manifest the existence and unbridled operation in himself of the principle of sin.—He may call salvation a gift. He may even prate about it as such at great length, expending all the flowers of human rhetoric in illustration of what in words he appears to be representing as a blessing which is freely bestowed. But this gift is null *unless accepted*. The offer of a *free* salvation is made; but *before it can become effectual to him*, the creature behoves to put forth the arms of his faith and love, and *thereby to embrace it*. That is, after all his prating, the salvation of which he conceives *is not free*. It is not a gift. It is to be viewed in the light of wages, to be earned by self-righteous labours which the creature is called on to perform. God, according to him, in making it, as a gift, to stand opposed to wages, Rom. vi. 23, is a liar; 1 John v. 10; or, at all events, has committed a gross mistake, which it becomes us to be thankful to our religious guides for having had the acuteness to detect, and the goodness to expose.

Thus it is that man makes God to be still a lawgiver, when he represents him as now imposing any conditions whatever of salvation. But God is not now a lawgiver. He has been issuing no law, whether of prohibition or command, since the period of Jerusalem's destruction. He now announces salvation as a matter of fact, and as a blessing in which all are interested. Divine laws or conditions of salvation have no existence, then, except in man's imagination. Self in the form of fleshly conscience is the deity which issues them, and to self are all attempts at obedience to them rendered. Man, therefore, is, in the enforcement of and in obedience to all such laws or conditions an idolator, and as in so doing he worships self, an idolator of the worst description. He persists in making himself a sinner, by his inability to obey laws

which he not God has imposed, in opposition to God proclaiming that sin is swallowed up in divine righteousness; and still more, he persists in making himself a sinner by clothing God with the character of a lawgiver, a character which is the opposite of that which he hath scripturally revealed as now belonging to himself, and by consequently resisting that salvation which God now makes known as a matter of fact. The principle of sin, which is the principle of human nature, now appearing in this way in the fulness of operation in the unregenerate, justifies me in representing the period which elapses from the destruction of Jerusalem till the end of time as the period of sin.

Sin in the height of its manifestation is, it thus appears, not disobedience to law, but denial of gospel. 1 John v. 9—11. Not inability to comply with conditions, but inability to understand, and therefore opposition to the revealed fact, that in the matter of salvation conditions to be performed by the creature have and can have no place whatever. Rom. xi. 6.

III. The third period is that during which death reigns, and it may be denominated, because it is, the period of death.

This extends from the end of time, when this world and the human race come to an end, and when the kingdom of Christ begins to be exercised and enjoyed by the whole body of the saints in the immediate presence of their heavenly Father, till the consummation of all things, when the kingdom of Christ as mediator shall be merged in the manifestation of God as all in all. 1 Cor. xv. 22—28. See also Hosea vi. 2.

During this period of death there will be of course no divine law, its existence and reign having ceased ages ago, when the Mosaic dispensation was overturned. And there will be no sin, for the termination of human nature involves

in it the termination of sin, by being the destruction of that nature which had previously manifested its sinfulness, not only in paradise, in Old Testament times, and during the apostolic ministration, but in that highest of all ways, the investing of God now with the attributes of a lawgiver, in opposition to his own declarations that he is now a Saviour, and thereby the denial of his gospel,—the way of manifesting man's sinfulness of which we have last been treating, and which renders the present æra of man's existence emphatically the æra of sin.

Death during the period of which we are now speaking,—viz., that from the end of this world till the consummation of all things,—exists and exerts its sway. Not merely the first death, or that of Adam, which implies no more than the loss of this present life, and is common to the members of the church with the world. But also and properly the second death, or that manifested as incurred by the transgression of the Jews in rejecting Christ glorified, and which consists in the complete and everlasting exclusion of the unregenerate from the kingdom of Christ and of God. *Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.* 1 Cor. xv. 50. See also John iii. 3, 5, and 1 Cor. vi. 9. The unregenerate, it is clear, while on earth possess nothing but a flesh and blood nature. Into the kingdom of God, therefore, they cannot by any possibility enter. But Christ's people escape the death of which we now speak. Being born again, and created anew in their divine Head, while on earth, and thereby possessed of overcoming principle, 1 John v. 4, they *are not hurt of the second death*; Rev. ii. 11; indeed, over them *the second death hath no power.* Rev. xx. 6. Having the earnest of the divine nature and eternal life here, as having had conferred upon them that knowledge and love of God wherein it consists, John xvii. 3, 17, 1 John iv. 8—16, they in due time enjoy the fulness of those heavenly blessings, in pre-

sence of God and of the Lamb. Death, therefore, in its second, higher, and more awful form, as consisting in complete and everlasting exclusion from the heavenly kingdom, Matt. xxv. 46, while it has no power over the regenerate, or partakers of *the first resurrection*, Rev. xx. 6, reigns over the unregenerate with perfect sway during the whole continuance of that kingdom; or from the end of time, till the consummation of all things. Rev. xx. 5. See also John iii. 3, 5.

Thus is death, like law and sin, an enemy of man and of Christ. And a tyrant over both, to whom even Christ, in order to have the opportunity of destroying his reign and himself, condescended for a time to submit. Heb. ii. 14, 15; Rom. v. 21. Death, however, blessed be God, is the last of our enemies. 1 Cor. xv. 26.

For, as law and sin, man's other two enemies, are in succession previously destroyed, so shall death in due time be destroyed likewise. And when destroyed, no other enemy remains. Destroyed was death, the last in order, in our Lord himself, by means of his resurrection from the dead, and ascension to his Father's right hand—law and sin, the former in his death, and the latter in his descent into hades, having been previously destroyed; and just so, after the previous destruction of law and sin, the former in the passing away of the Mosaic dispensation, and the latter in the termination of human nature and this present world, destroyed shall death be likewise last of all in the family of man, by that complete carrying out of the resurrection and ascension power of Christ, which consists in the manifestation of God, through Christ and the church, as *all in all*. Rom. viii. 19—23; 1 Cor. xv. 23—28.

Until then, death reigns, and reigns as the consequence of the previous reign of law and sin; but apart from the actual reign—indeed, apart from the actual existence—of both,

while its own existence and reign are being developed. This is going on from the end of time till the consummation of all things. Over the unregenerate, over mere creature nature, death is then reigning alone. At last, the almighty fiat goes forth. Life everlasting takes full effect. *Death itself is swallowed up in victory.* 1 Cor. xv. 54; Hosea xiii. 14. The third death, (if such a phrase may be permitted,) or highest punishment of sin, consisting in the complete and everlasting swallowing up of creature nature, with all its effects and consequences, in the nature of the Creator, and thereby the rendering it absolutely impossible that creature nature as such should ever live again, is inflicted. The third *death*, did I say? Why, to call what then takes place *death*, is an abuse of the term. As in our blessed Lord's personal resurrection and ascension, so in this ultimate resurrection and ascension of all, it is *life*,—life conferred, and life enjoyed, in the highest degree, and to the fullest extent. Certainly the mere nature of the creature, and all that belongs to the mere nature of the creature, then receives its death-blow, and passes away for ever; for, beyond that third æra, it is impossible for mere creature nature to exist: but this takes place, not in consequence of the abstract destruction of creature nature, but in consequence of the entire nature of the creature being clothed upon and superseded by the entire nature of the Creator. 1 Cor. xv. 54; 2 Cor. v. 4. The third death is the death of death. Death, then, is no more. All, thenceforward, is life, and life only. The existence and reign of death, like the previous existence and reign of law and sin, shall have come to an end: that end or issue being, the destruction of human nature, and of law, sin, and death, as affections of human nature, in consequence of human nature having been superseded by the divine nature, and of law, sin, and death having been superseded by love, righteousness, and life everlasting, affections of the divine nature; or in a word,

in consequence of life, the substantial and positive because divine principle, having superseded death, the shadowy and negative because creature principle, completely, universally, and for ever. Psalm cii. 25—28; civ. 31—35; Hosea vi. 2, xiii. 14; Luke ii. 13, 14; John xvii. 2; Rom. viii. 19—23; 1 Cor. xv. 20—28; 2 Cor. v. 1—5; 1 Tim. ii. 4, 6; iv. 10; Heb. ii. 7, 8, 14, 15; James i. 18; 1 John ii. 2; iii. 8; Rev. xiv. 4; xxi. 1—5.

Not that the unregenerate,—not that any possessed of *mere* creature nature while in flesh,—ever enter into, ever enjoy the kingdom of God. John iii. 3, 5; xvii. 17; Rom. viii. 9; 1 Cor. xv. 50. So far from their inheriting this privilege, the last act of Christ's kingdom being the manifestation of *God as all in all*, an act in the very performance of which his kingdom expires, 1 Cor. xv. 23—28, of course, into a kingdom which, in the very act of their new creation, ceases to have any existence, the unregenerate cannot enter. And besides, to reign implies having subjects. These Christ and the church have, in the persons of the unregenerate; it being over them that their glorious reign of love is exercised. Rom. viii. 19—23; xii. 20, 21; 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3; Ibid. xv. 25. But when the unregenerate and all other created beings shall, at the consummation of all things, be made new, as there will remain neither person nor thing to be reigned over, the idea of any one of them entering into a kingdom, or possessing kingly power, is altogether out of the question. The proper character of the members of the church is that of kings, for they reign with Christ; Rev. i. 6; the proper character of the unregenerate is that of subjects, for instead of reigning, they are reigned over. 1 Cor. xv. 25; Heb. ii. 8, 9.

The reign of death,—of the first death, or that of Adam, consisting in the loss of this life, and still more of the second death, or that incurred and inflicted on the Jews, consisting

in eternal exclusion from the heavenly kingdom, or of the death, not only of body, but also of soul,—it is now, I hope, well understood, extends over all, except the members of the church of Christ, who, during the period of its continuance in the case of others, are living and reigning with their glorified Head.

And the reign of death, thus explained, enlarged, and yet restricted, it is equally well understood, I hope, extends from the end of time till the consummation of all things. Then shall it be brought to an end. And this shall be effected by what may be denominated either improperly the third death, as consisting in that complete and everlasting destruction of creature nature, which is the appropriate punishment deserved by man's third and highest exhibition of enmity to God; or, more properly life,—the complete and everlasting communication of life,—which no doubt is in a certain sense death, but which, as being the death of death itself, or the swallowing up of death in its own victorious nature, deserves to be both considered and denominated LIFE—life completely, gloriously, everlastingly, divinely triumphant.

Simply and briefly, but most instructively, is the whole process of the progressive ending of law, ending of sin, and ending of death, of which we have just been treating, related in the fifteenth chapter of Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians.

After stating:—

But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive;

The Holy Ghost, by the mouth of his inspired apostle, with reference to our present subject, is pleased thus to express himself:—

1. *But every man in his own order. Christ the first-fruits.*

The resurrection and ascension of our blessed Lord, which constituted the first step in the process, after the lapse of forty years issued in bringing to an end the Old Testament Dispensation, and along with it divine law.

2. *Afterwards they that are Christ's, at his coming.*

This, which is the second step in the process,—and which consists in the introduction of the members of the church of Christ, through the resurrection of their bodies, into the full enjoyment of those privileges of the heavenly kingdom, the earnest of which they possess in their minds while on earth,—is accomplished at the end of time; and being accompanied with the sweeping away of the human race, and thereby of the sinful nature, implies the termination of sin.

3. *Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power, (for he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet: the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death: for he hath put all things under his feet; but when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things under him;) and when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.**

What explanation of these plain and most luminous statements need I subjoin? Law and sin having been both, the one at the first and the other at the second of the periods spoken of, previously destroyed, nothing remains but the destruction of death. And death as the last enemy—the last of

* 1 Cor. xv. 20—28.

the three—is ultimately, as we are here informed, destroyed. This is the end of all that is creaturely and progressive;—the *euthanasia* in question taking place by means of the manifestation of God in the character which from everlasting to everlasting is peculiarly and exclusively his own. He is Jehovah, the living one, the all in all.

SECTION SIXTH.

CLOSING REMARKS.

With a passing explanatory remark or two I shall now conclude.

First. Although involving a somewhat different arrangement, the three æras or periods which we have last been considering tend to shed much light upon those which are connected with the leading topic of the present work.

To shew how man's enmity to God has been progressively manifested is what we have chiefly aimed at; and before reaching the conclusion, we drew attention to three periods in which the progressive manifestation of this enmity has taken place. 1. That of paradise, ending with the fall of Adam. 2. That of the existence of the descendants of Abraham according to the flesh, ending with disobedience on their part to the law of faith, and thereby the rejection of Jesus of Nazareth crucified and glorified as the Messiah. And, 3, that of the world from the destruction of Jerusalem till the end of time, during which period mankind in general trampled under foot the revealed fact of salvation being freely bestowed upon them, and being theirs, preferring in opposition to this to consider and represent God as a law-giver, or prescriber to them of conditions of salvation, and

salvation as only capable of being attained to and enjoyed by them in virtue of their fulfilment of such supposed conditions. This third period, we saw, ended with the termination of the present world, and consequently with the termination of human nature, and human enmity as exhibited by it.

In the latter part of the conclusion, we have considered three other æras or periods in connexion with man's history ; æras or periods which, without in the slightest degree interfering with the three previously spoken of, carry our views forward a step farther, and thereby, with a small variation of the arrangement, present the subject under not so much a different, as an additional aspect. These last æras are, 1, the period of divine law's existence, operation, and termination ; 2, the period of sin's peculiar existence, operation, and termination ; and 3, the period of death's peculiar existence, operation, and termination. The difference between this arrangement of periods and that adopted in the body of the work, is merely this, that the period of law, or first period of the series treated of in the conclusion, takes in the first and second periods of the work, or those of Adam's and the Israelites' exhibition of enmity ; that the period of sin, or second period of the conclusion, takes in the third period of the work ; and that the period of death, or third period of the conclusion, embraces a period or state of things not directly adverted to in the work, beginning where the period of the third exhibition of man's enmity ends, namely, the termination of this present world, and running from that till the consummation of all things. In every other respect except what has just been stated, there is the most perfect coincidence between the two series or arrangements of periods.

Particularly valuable is the series adopted in the conclusion, when the second period of which it treats is considered in connexion with the third period of the body of the work.

The periods are the same. Only, what in the body of the work is spoken of as the period of the third and greatest exhibition of man's enmity, is spoken of in the conclusion as the period of sin, or the period in which the restraints of divine law being completely removed, the sinful nature of man has the fullest opportunity afforded to it for the display of what it is. Different however as may be the phraseology employed, the idea meant to be conveyed is the same. In the third period of the one, which is coincident and identical with the second period of the other, man's enmity to God, or the principle of sin,—both meaning the same thing,—comes out in making God a lawgiver, instead of a saviour, and then in idolatrously worshipping the creature of his own imagination, that is, in worshipping self; comes out in setting up salvation by works, either in a grosser or more refined form, in opposition to God's plan of salvation by grace, Rom. xi. 6; comes out in denying that we are actually saved in Christ, or that we can be so, except as fulfilling conditions, in opposition to the fact revealed by God, and insisted upon throughout his word, that we are actually saved in Christ, whether we know it or not. 1 John v. 9—11. This we have seen in the work itself, is the highest form which man's enmity to God is capable of assuming; and this, we have seen in the conclusion, is that course of procedure on the part of the great majority of the human race, which stamps upon what is there called the second period, the peculiar and distinctive appellation of the period of sin. The third period of the work thus entirely agreeing with the second period of the conclusion, the difference of the arrangement of the two series, so far from being productive of inconsistency and confusion, tends, by means of the exact and perfect sameness of the phenomena included under both series, so far as they run together, and by means of the additional views brought under notice in connexion with the period of death, to render

the two series subservient to the shedding of light the one on the other.

Secondly. Although I have treated of the character of God as manifested progressively, or in a series of successive developments, yet, be it observed, that, as in Jehovah himself there neither is nor can be any change, so, at bottom and absolutely considered, in the manifestation of himself change is equally and altogether out of the question. God is unchangeable—from everlasting to everlasting the same. Psalm xc. 2; James i. 17. Just so his manifestation of himself is, properly speaking, unsusceptible either of increase or of diminution. Heb. xiii. 8. Succession, as to divine manifestation, has a reference merely to creature mind: while creature mind and nature last, such successive and progressive manifestations of God must last likewise. But when creature nature is superseded by the divine nature, then will divine manifestation assume its true, that is, its unchangeable form.—Assume, do I say? The expression is an incorrect one. It stands inseparably connected with the doctrine of divine manifestation being progressive. And loses all truth and applicability the moment that such manifestation is regarded as being, what it actually is absolutely considered, unchangeable.—And yet, what can I do? I know no word, no form of human language, in which to convey my meaning. Unchangeable and everlasting, because infinite, divine manifestation implies a state of things which creature mind, and consequently creature language, never has realized, and never can realize. It can only be apprehended in the fulness of the possession and enjoyment of the divine nature itself.

SUMMARY OF THE WHOLE WORK.

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My grand proposition, resting on the basis of revealed truth, is, that

Man's mind, consisting of fleshly intellect and will, *is enmity against God*; or, in other words, that man is not merely *different from*, but that he stands diametrically *opposed to* God in his very nature itself, and therefore in all his feelings, tendencies, desires, views, and pursuits. Rom. viii. 7; Gal. v. 17. See also Matt. xvi. 21—23, and John iii. 6.

This enmity or opposition of man to God exhibits itself progressively in three grand forms, or after three grand fashions:—

1. In violating the law of prohibition. Gen. ii. 16, 17; iii. 1—6. This occurred originally in paradise, and was the means of the termination of man's state of creature innocence. Gen. iii. 23, 24. Violations of laws of prohibition, whether issued by God himself, as in the case of the Jews, or by conscience as in the case of Gentiles and human beings now, have been and are continually manifesting and attesting the existence of this form of creature enmity.

2.—In disobeying the law of command, or law of faith. Acts xvi. 31; Rom. iii. 27; x. 6—11. This took place in its most marked form, and as the ground of the infliction of the severest judgments, in the case of the Jews who lived during the forty years of the apostolic ministry; their unbelief in Jesus as the Messiah having been the means of bringing

to an end their state and privileges as the external and earthly church of God. Acts xxviii. 25—28; 1 Thess. ii. 14—16; 2 Thess. i. 7—10. Opposition to God, in the form of disobedience to the law of faith, had however existed in every preceding age, from man's original transgression downwards. Gen. vi. throughout; Gen. xviii. 17—33; xix. throughout; Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy throughout; Psalm lxxviii. throughout; Acts vii. throughout, especially verses 51—53.

3. In considering and representing God as now a lawgiver, or imposer of conditions, and acting accordingly, in opposition to his own revealed testimony that he is now issuing no laws whatever, but is freely bestowing heavenly blessings and life everlasting upon the guilty. Rom. vi. 23; Heb. viii. 8—12; Titus iii. 4—7. Rather, in maintaining that salvation will be bestowed *conditionally*, in opposition to God declaring as a matter of fact that he hath bestowed it upon the *whole* human family *unconditionally*; by this denial of revealed truth making God a liar. 1 Cor. xv. 22; 1 John v. 9—11. Human enmity to God is exhibited in this its highest form, during the whole period which elapses from the destruction of Jerusalem till the end of time; and its coming to a height is the ground and means of the destruction of this present world. Rev. xx. 7—9; 2 Peter iii. 3—12.

As connected inseparably with these main facts, several other important truths have been brought forward and insisted on in this volume. Among these are such as the following:—

The enmity or opposition of man to God is exhibited in the persons,

1. Of one man, Adam. Gen. iii. 6; Rom. v. 12—14.

2. Of one nation, that of Israel. Acts xiii. 40, 41; xxviii. 25—28; 1 Thess. ii. 14—16.

3. Of mankind in general, whatever the age in which they live,—whatever their clime or country,—whatever their cir-

cumstances,—whatever their secular character,—whatever their profession of religion may be. Rev. xiii. throughout.

Again: the circumstances under which this enmity is exhibited are,

1. Miraculous. Gen. ii. and iii.

2. Partly miraculous, and partly not so. Old Testament and Rom. ii. throughout. And

3. Not miraculous at all. John xx. 29 ; 1 Cor. xiii. 8—10.

Also, still farther,

1. The state of paradise, in which the first display of enmity took place, was one of almost total ignorance.

2. The state of things implied in the Mosaic dispensation was one of superior, and yet of imperfect knowledge. Matt. xiii. 17 ; xvi. 21—23 ; John xvi. throughout ; xx. 9 ; Acts ii. 22, 23 ; iii. 17 ; iv. 2 ; xiii. 27 ; 1 Cor. ii. 8 ; 2 Tim. i. 10 ; Heb. ix. throughout ; x. 1—22 ; 1 Peter i. 10—12 ; 2 Peter i. 21.

3. The state of things which now exists presents to us human knowledge and human civilization in the course of being carried out to the highest possible degree.

To which I add, that the punishments of the enmity, or rather of human nature as exhibiting the enmity, are, like the exhibitions of the enmity themselves, progressive ; each additional display of enmity being accompanied with an additional infliction of punishment. The punishments are,

1. Death, or loss of natural life. Gen. ii. 16, 17 ; iii. 19 ; Rom. v. 12 ; 1 Cor. xv. 22.

2. Exclusion from the heavenly kingdom, or the second death. John iii. 3, 5 ; 1 Cor. xv. 50. And,

3. Complete and everlasting destruction, in consequence of the complete and everlasting supersession of the nature of the earthy by the nature of the heavenly, or of the swallowing up of the nature of the earthy in the nature of the heavenly. 1 Cor. xv. 49, 54 ; 2 Cor. v. 4 ; Phil. iii. 21.

And all this as still farther connected with three progressive manifestations of the divine mercy. This being displayed,

1. In the form of long-suffering patience, in not inflicting death immediately upon Adam, but in continuing him in life, to an advanced age, and his posterity in existence till the end of time. Gen. v. 4, 5; Psalm ciii. 8; 2 Peter iii. 9.

2. In the form of reconciling to himself, through the death of his Son, a church in flesh, consisting of Jews and Gentile converts, before punishing the earthly church for its unbelief with exclusion from the heavenly state and kingdom. Rom. v. 10. And

3. In the form of saving, by the life of his Son, all the members of his internal, spiritual, and heavenly church, in every succeeding age, and conceding to them, as one with his Son, introduction into the enjoyment of all those glorious privileges, of which he himself is now in full possession. Rom. v. 10; xiii. 11; 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12.

Hints, besides, have been given of the progressive display of God's character as love,

1. In raising and glorifying his Son Jesus.

2. In raising and glorifying the church of his Son, as one with him in his character of spiritual Abraham. And

3. In ultimately raising and glorifying all, as one with Jesus in his highest and universal character as spiritual Adam, or as all in all. 1 Cor. xv. 20—28.

Am I asked, to what topics particularly I have been desirous to draw attention?

I answer,

1. To the circumstance scarcely at all understood, and, when attempted to be treated of, perplexed by the ignorance, absurdities, and perverse reasonings of men who would fain be considered theologians, viz., that now no divine law exists, except the law of man's nature; and that the gospel, or glad tidings, is now proclaimed in God's word as a matter of

fact. Men would fain represent the gospel as now a law, and faith as obedience to that law; thereby, however refined their opposition to divine truth may be, making eternal life *conditional*. Herein is man's enmity to God displayed in its highest and most deadly form. In opposition to all such perverted views of scripture, and false theories of what God is at present proclaiming, it has been my wish to shew that God now declares the work of salvation to be finished, and thereby incapable of receiving any addition, improvement, or confirmation on the part of the creature; John xix. 30; Rom. x. 4; Titus iii. 5; declares eternal life to be his gift, and the creature to be complete in Christ; Rom. vi. 23; Col. ii. 10; and declares that every human being, without exception, is even now saved, with an everlasting salvation, in his own Son. 1 Cor. xv. 22; 1 Tim. iv. 10; Heb. ii. 9. (See Christ's own words, John xii. 32.) Salvation and life everlasting are thus, in the scriptures of truth, proclaimed as blessings in which all, without a single exception, and that at the present moment, are interested. That is, salvation and life everlasting are not future and contingent,—are not *conditional*; but are at the present moment, as they have been from everlasting and shall be to everlasting, enjoyed by the whole human race in Christ. This is the divinely declared *matter of fact*. True; to but few, during the time state, is this divinely declared truth revealed as what it is. To few are given *the ears to hear*, so that *they hear*. Matt. xiii. 9; Rev. xiii. 9. To few it is given to say with truth,—*This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son*. 1 John v. 11. For to but few does Jesus stand in the relation of spiritual Abraham; and few does he beget again with the divine seed, the word of God. 1 Peter i. 23. Hence the majority of mankind reject what God hath said in his word concerning the completeness, the freeness, the universality of salvation. They suspend the

enjoyment of it upon conditions remaining to be fulfilled by themselves or others. They deny that salvation is theirs. They thus deny what God hath revealed as matter of fact, and in so doing *make God a liar*. 1 John v. 10. In this consists the present and highest exhibition of man's enmity to God.—Now this is one of the grand truths to which I have been desirous to draw the attention of readers. Salvation is revealed in God's word as enjoyed by the whole human family in Christ; and the truth of this is made known to the members of the church in the form of their being made to see that salvation belongs to themselves personally. Rom. viii. 14—16; 1 John iii. 1; v. 11. But the divinely revealed fact is denied by every man who makes salvation to be to himself and others *conditional*: he, in so doing, manifesting the deadly enmity of his mind to God. He is not now hating divine law; he is hating divinely revealed fact—fact, too, in which his own eternal happiness is concerned.*

2. To the circumstance that, however paradoxical to mere fleshly mind the idea may appear, the highest punishment of human nature, and the highest blessing conferred by God on man, are actually identical. In other words, that God, in punishing, blesses in the highest degree the subjects of his punishment. Human nature, which had been previously manifested as deserving the death of body, by means of Adam's one transgression,—and as deserving the death of soul, or exclusion from the heavenly kingdom, by means of the unbelief, or disobedience to the law of faith, of Abraham's fleshly descendants,—is last of all manifested as deserving complete and everlasting destruction, by means of mankind in general denying divinely revealed fact, and thereby making God a liar. But the destruction, or highest punishment of human nature is effected through the medium of its new

* 1 Cor. xv. 22; 1 Tim. iv. 10; 1 John v. 9—11.

creation in Jesus glorified. In this way is it destroyed, by being new created in the persons of the members of the church, in time, as to their minds, Rom. viii. 3—9, 2 Cor. v. 17, and at the end of time, or fulness of Christ's second coming, as to their bodies likewise. Phil. iii. 21. And in this way it is destroyed, by being new created, in the persons of the unregenerate, at the consummation of all things, when *death the last enemy is destroyed*, and God is manifested as *the all in all*. 1 Cor. xv. 23—28; Rev. xxi. 5. Then has the corruptible, the incorruptible put upon it; then has the mortal, the immortal put upon it; and, as the necessary result, *death is swallowed up in victory*. 1 Cor. xv. 54. Who, understanding this, and knowing its truth, sees not, in the whole process, the severest punishment inflicted on man's sinful and guilty nature, through the manifestation of love to man carried out to the greatest possible extent? Who sees not the highest exhibition of man's hatred to God, giving birth, as it were, to the highest exhibition of God's love to man? Rather, who sees not in the highest exhibition of the hatred of human nature, an opportunity afforded for the highest exhibition of that love which constitutes the divine nature? For, it is as clothing the descendants of Adam with the divine nature of Jesus Christ, that the everlasting, and therefore complete punishment of man's enmity to God is inflicted. That is, the highest exhibition of God's hatred of sin, and of the nature from which sin proceeds, is actually the highest exhibition of God's love to those by whom that nature is temporarily borne. Rom. viii. 20, 21. Evil displayed on their part towards God, is overcome by good displayed on God's part towards them. Rom. xii. 21. Their enmity to God is overcome by God's love to them. 1 John iv. 8—10, 19. And evil and enmity, when they have reached their height, thus merely give occasion, by way of contrast, Gal. v. 17, for goodness and love, the attributes of the divine nature,

to reach their height likewise. 1 Tim. ii. 6. Man destroys himself—pursuing the process of self-destruction, until he has carried it out to the fullest extent: in God, blessed be his name, is man's help found. Hosea xiii. 9. O! the wonders of the sovereign grace and infinite love of God! Man is eternally punished, by having his Adamic nature eternally destroyed; and yet, in the very act of eternally punishing, by eternally destroying man's Adamic nature, God appears abounding towards him in the display and exercise of love! For he effects the destruction of human nature, by means of clothing for ever the children of man, sinful and dying in themselves, with his own nature, which is righteous, and lives for evermore. 1 Cor. xv. 47—49.

3. To the circumstance, that the nature of God, in ultimately new creating the nature of man, actually inflicts death, in the truest and fullest sense of the term, upon the nature of man. For thereby not only is human nature, body and soul, ended—which it is as to the former in the Adamic death, and as to the latter by the death brought to light through the Jews' disobedience—but so ended as that there is no possibility of its living as human nature again.—The Adamic death, or death of the body, left a possibility of those who had already undergone it living again for a while in time, before ultimately submitting to its stroke. Witness the cases of the son of the widow of Nain, Luke vii. 11—16, of Jairus' daughter, Mark v. 22—43, and of Lazarus, John xi. throughout.—A similar remark applies to the death of the soul.*—And the reason is, that both were mere negatives, consisting either in the loss, or at the utmost in the deprivation of what, so long as creature nature was not superseded by the divine nature, or rather, in the event of creature nature not being superseded by the divine nature, might have been

* 1 Samuel xxviii. 7—20; Acts xii. 15.

restored.—But, once superseded by the divine nature, there was left no possibility of human nature, as such, ever living again. And therefore in the new creation of man in Jesus glorified, recognizing the complete and everlasting destruction, we recognise the true death of human nature. In our Lord's resurrection there occurred, in himself personally, the true and complete death of human nature. And just so in the resurrection of others, and their complete conformity to himself glorified, does human nature in them receive its death-blow, or does it die completely and for ever. At the consummation of all things, does this everlasting death of man's nature take full effect, for then is it entirely destroyed, by being entirely superseded by, and swallowed up in the divine nature. I admit, that to apply the term death to this process, is somewhat improper; seeing that, as by the new creation of that as a whole in the second Adam, or all in all, which had undergone an old creation in the first Adam, life everlasting is communicated, the nature of the operation in question is one of life, not of death. True, it is the death of death. But, like the result of the multiplication of two negative quantities in algebra, the result here is purely positive. The death of death is not death, but life everlasting; life conferred and enjoyed in the highest sense of the term. When, therefore, I denominate the putting forth of Christ's new creating power, whether in the case of the church, or in the case of the world, death, I mean no more than to suggest the fact, that as, in having life everlasting conferred upon him, man can no longer live again with Adam's nature,—the image of the earthy being swallowed up in the image of the heavenly—life everlasting is to him truly the death, the eternal death, of Adam's nature.

4. To the circumstance, that it being by the divine nature human nature is ultimately and for ever superseded, and divine nature being the ever present nature, therefore it is

that God is in his word proclaiming the whole human race to be even now,—to be even at this present moment,—saved and living in Christ. 1 Tim. iv. 10; Heb. ii. 9. Simple and obvious as is the fact of which I am now speaking to all who are even but moderately acquainted with *the truth as it is in Jesus*, a word or two of explanation may be required for the sake of some whose minds have never been turned towards the subject, or who are entangled in popular delusions.—God is Jehovah, or the *I Am*. Exodus iii. 14. God, therefore, lives not in *the past* and *the future*, as man does, but in *the everlastingly present*; and the divine nature stands opposed to human nature, as being the everlastingly present, because unchangeable nature. Exod. iii. 15; Psalm xc. 2; cii. 24—27; cxxxv. 13; Matt. xxii. 32.* And as God is the *I Am*, so is Christ, as one with God, and as the everlasting, complete, and unchangeable manifestation of God, the *I Am* likewise; John viii. 58, Heb. xiii. 8; the nature of Jesus glorified being the *I Am* or ever present, that is, the divine nature. Matt. xviii. 20; John xvii. 5; Acts vii. 55, 56, 59, ix. 3—5, xiii. 33; 1 Cor. xv. 45—47—49; 2 Peter i. 2—4; Rev. ii. 23, compared with Jeremiah xi. 20, xvii. 10. To have the nature of Christ, that is, the nature of God, superinduced upon the minds of the members of the church, is to have the earnest of the everlastingly present nature superinduced on them, and is for those who are so privileged to have the present, the everlastingly present enjoyment of salvation; John v. 24; Rom. viii. 15, 16; Gal. ii. 20; 1 John iii. 1, 2; v. 11; and so, to have the nature of God ultimately superinduced on all, is to have the everlastingly present nature taking hold of all, enwrapping all, and assimilating all to itself. 1 Tim. ii. 6; 1 Cor. xv. 22, 28; 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. What is this, however,

* Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were dead as to men. But Jehovah declared himself to be their God—the term God implying everlasting and indestructible relationship. In God, and as one with God, then, they were alive.

but in other words to say that now, even at this present moment, all, without a single exception,—as a matter of fact, and not as a matter of contingency or conditionality,—are saved in Christ with an everlasting salvation?—Observe, the nature of Christ which thus supersedes human nature is the everlasting present, the *I Am* nature; and as this everlastingly present, this *I Am* nature, takes hold of and thereby saves all, then are all, *even now*, as they have been from everlasting, and shall be to everlasting, in reality and as matter of present and positive fact, saved in him. In him, as the *I Am*, *they are* saved.—True, fleshly mind cannot comprehend this, because fleshly mind lives not in *the present*, but in *the past* and *the future*. With its *past* and *future* forms of apprehension, which are but *shadowy*, it cannot, therefore, apprehend or take hold of the *everlastingly present*, which is *substantial*. 1 Cor. ii. 14—16. Speaking after its own fashion, fleshly mind cannot help speaking, because it cannot help thinking, of salvation as solely and exclusively *future*, whether as enjoyed by *some* or by *all*. Indeed, if we are to be understood at all, we are constrained, as scripture itself from time to time does, to use terms expressive of the futurity of heavenly enjoyments, such as *afterwards*, *ultimately*, and so on. But while we do so, as taught from above we know, that such terms neither do express nor can express the real state of things. They are merely of the nature of accommodations to creature mind, and therefore do not interfere with the fact being as I have suggested. Viewed divinely, or in the light of the divine nature, that is, *truly*, the *future* equally with the *past* disappears; and man,—meaning thereby all men,—is seen saved *even now*. Salvation thus discloses itself as a *present fact*, not as a *future contingency*. He who denies this, because by his creature faculties he cannot apprehend it,—and no creature faculties can apprehend that, which, when understood, must of necessity be apprehending them,

Gal. iv. 9, Phil. iii. 12,—makes God a liar, in so doing manifesting his ignorance of God and enmity to God. 1 John v. 10. To him who has himself been taken hold of by the I Am, or everlastingly present nature, and who has in himself therefore the earnest of life everlasting, views that are connected merely with the *past* and *future*, or with man's nature, having been superseded so far by views connected with the *everlastingly present*, or with God's nature, every thing is rendered plain and satisfactory.

What, then, is the substance of the whole?

That, at the consummation of all things, does Christ, in the fullest extent of the meaning of the passage, Matt. xxv. 31—46, sit on the throne of his glory, inflicting punishment, and bestowing favours. When, at the period of Jerusalem's destruction, the earthly church of Israel, which had manifested hatred to our Lord and his cause, after having been placed on his left hand, was eternally excluded from the heavenly kingdom; and when the heavenly church, which had exhibited love to him and his cause, after having been placed on his right hand, was admitted into the eternal possession and enjoyment of that kingdom; the passage alluded to received unquestionably in a certain sense its accomplishment. Not, however, in so high and perfect a sense as when Jesus, no longer revealed as mediator merely, but as all in all—no longer appearing as spiritual Abraham, but revealed in all the fulness of his glory as spiritual Adam—placing all human beings, as descendants of Adam, and as actuated by a principle of enmity to God, in periods numbered by succession, or on his left hand; and placing the same beings, as descendants of and as new created in himself the spiritual Adam, and as actuated by the principle of love to God, in eternity proper, or on his right hand; 1 Cor. xv. 49; punishes the nature of the former, or human nature, by swallowing it up eternally in the nature of the latter, or in the divine

nature. Matt xxv. 46. Here is at once the endurance of everlasting punishment, and the enjoyment of everlasting life. Adam's nature is eternally punished, by being eternally destroyed; Heb. xii. 29; and yet, O wondrous love! the punishment is inflicted through the medium of conferring upon those whose creature nature is thus destroyed, the gift of life eternal. Exod. iii. 2. In order to this being understood, recollect that Adam's nature and Christ's nature are not the natures of two distinct and independent sets of individuals. They are the natures of one and the same set of individuals, descended successively from two different heads, and living successively in two different states of existence. 1 Cor. xv. 47—49. Rather, they are the natures of two heads, the one of whom is involved in the other; Rom. v. 14; and they imply two states of existence, the one of which is involved in the other. 1 Cor. xv. 54; 2 Cor. v. 4. The earthly head and state are not independent of the heavenly head and state; on the contrary, the two former are both dependent on the two latter. The two former, as earthly and shadowy, are involved in the two latter as heavenly and substantial; the two former, as creaturely, are involved in the two latter, as divine. Under these circumstances, while it is true that at the manifestation of God as all in all, 1 Cor. xv. 28, Adam's nature and Adam's descendants as such are eternally punished, or are subjected to the execution of the divine vengeance in its highest form, by being eternally destroyed, the punishment which they have deserved is inflicted upon them after the most glorious and delightful of all fashions, viz., by the incorruptible nature of Christ being put upon the corruptible nature of Adam; and the immortal nature of Christ being put upon the mortal nature of Adam; and by the shadowy and dependent nature which they have inherited from Adam upon earth, being thus superseded by and swallowed up in the substantial and independent

nature of God himself, conferred upon them as their everlasting inheritance with him in the heavens. This happened in Christ, when, ascending up on high, he shewed human nature in himself superseded by the divine nature. And it will happen in them, when human nature shall ultimately be superseded in them by the divine nature. Thus is eternal punishment inflicted on human beings as a whole, through the medium of conferring upon them, as a whole, eternal life; and God thus rewards men's enmity to himself by such a display of enmity to them in return, as consists not in his returning evil for evil, as if he had been overcome by their evil, but in his giving them to live with himself for ever, and thereby overcoming their evil with good. Rom. xii. 21.

God is the I AM. In him, as the I AM, all are even *now* saved. But the fulness of the manifestation of his ever present and ever living nature, and of the salvation of all as inseparably connected therewith, speaking humanly, and speaking therefore with reference to our minds as capable of conceiving only of *the past* and *the future*, remains to be disclosed at the consummation of all things; when the nature of Adam shall be entirely and for ever superseded by the nature of God in Christ revealed as the all in all, and when *death shall be swallowed up in victory*.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

CURSORY NOTICE OF TWO PUBLICATIONS.

- 1.—THE THEORY OF DIVINE INVERSION EXAMINED. By Thomas Weatherill, M.D., Liverpool.—*Liverpool*, 1843.
- 2.—THE SECOND ADVENT OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST A PAST EVENT. By Robert Townley, A.B., late Minister of St. Matthew's, Liverpool.—*London*, 1845.—NOTE D.

Although it cannot be expected that I should advert to any of the anonymous reviews of my "Divine Inversion" to which the publication of that work gave birth,* yet the abilities, as well as position in society, of the two gentlemen who have accompanied their strictures with their names, seem to demand on my part some notice of their respective productions.

To both I beg to observe that I consider myself honoured by my work having been deemed worthy of their animadversions; and to both, especially to Dr. Weatherill, I beg to tender my most respectful acknowledgments for the courtesy which I have experienced at their hands.

Want of leisure compels me, without any farther preface, to dash at once *in medias res*; and therefore I proceed to the consideration of the two articles in the order in which they are

* Such as those in the "Christian Teacher," "Gospel Magazine," "Tait's Magazine," "American Universalist Quarterly Review," &c. &c.

set down, which is also the order in which they made their appearance.

I.—Dr. WEATHERILL'S.

The Doctor enquires, "Divine Inversion! *cui bono?* for what end or purpose did its author intend it?" I answer, for the purpose of bringing under the notice of the church of God a most important principle, on the basis of which the inspired writings are constructed,—a principle which, if it has not been altogether neglected, has hitherto not met with the attention which it appears to me to deserve. Milton speaks of it as one object of his glorious Epic,

"To vindicate the ways of God to man;"

and what was his object, is, in my humbler sphere of composition, mine also. Surely if the scriptures be of any value whatever,—and of supreme value they are to us who know and love their contents,—every hint, from whatever quarter it may come, which is calculated to supply us with a key to their true interpretation, must be hailed with avidity.

Several of my views having been misapprehended by the learned writer of the "Examination" under review, and this having given rise to several misstatements on his part, I shall devote the remainder of my observations on his pamphlet to an attempt to set him right in regard to some of the more important of his mistakes. Profiting by a practice of William Cobbett's, I shall number my strictures, with a view to the greater facility of reference.

1. The Doctor, at page 7th, represents me as saying unqualifiedly that "God hates man, and man hates God." Were he to do me the favour to peruse my preface, still more my whole work again, he would discover, that while according to scripture I represent man as opposing God and God as opposing man, or speak of a mutual enmity as subsisting between the creature and the Creator, see Gal. v. 17, I also shew that the enmity of the Creator to the creature is not the same thing as the enmity of the creature to the Creator: the enmity or opposition of man to God

being the enmity of hatred; Romans viii. 7; whereas the enmity or opposition of God to man is the enmity of love. 1 John iv. 8—10 God in withstanding the creature, instead of being overcome by the creature's evil, is overcoming the creature's evil with good. Romans xii. 21, with Matt. v. 45.

2. In prosecution of his opposition to man's nature, or, as I express myself strongly,—with a view to such scriptural phrases as those occurring Luke xiv. 26, &c., and in order to draw attention to what I am saying,—of his hatred to man's nature, God supersedes man's nature altogether, by clothing the corruptible with his own incorruptible, and the mortal with his own immortal nature. 1 Cor. xv. 54. God's hatred to human nature thus eventuating in his elevation and conversion of it into the divine nature, is at bottom and in reality one mode of the exhibition of the divine character as love. My learned annotator, not observing this process and effect of divine love, understands me as employing the phrase, "God's hatred to man," and similar expressions, in a gross, carnal, and ordinary sense. See pages 7, 8, &c. &c.

3. Dr. Weatherill speaks of my "withholding a clue to my secret," p. 8. I have no secret. My work, so far from propounding a secret, is, if the language may be allowed, the opening up of one; being a statement as distinct as I can make it of something which I have discovered to be divinely true. I have, in the work alluded to, taken the trouble to bring under the notice of the church what had been previously in a great measure overlooked by its members. And as to "a clue," I do not, I confess, very well know what my learned antagonist means. The scriptures, from being constructed on principles which are divine,—and consequently adverse to those of fleshly mind,—are a puzzle to that mind. And in making known the fact of divine inversion, or of the mutual antagonism subsisting between divine and fleshly minds, I am furnishing others with "a clue," (not the only clue, but one,) by availing themselves of which alone can the sacred volume be understood. I am therefore doing the very thing which my friendly critic tells me I should do.

4. "Mr. Thom thinks it necessary for us to understand or have knowledge before we can have faith or belief," p. 8. In natural things, certainly. Not so, however, in things which are spiritual and divine. In them it is "through faith we understand" or know. Heb. xi. 3. That is, in divine things faith is the sole medium of understanding or knowledge. Therefore Dr. Weatherill, in the words at the top of this paragraph, only gives one part of my views; and, looking to the preface where the subject is treated of by me, only quotes a part of my statement. I am not "unmindful of the distinction" between faith and knowledge; and in my view of matters it is the learned Doctor, not St. Paul, who "is in error."

5. I acknowledge that there is in man the shadow of free will, or a shadowy free will; and that to himself, unless taught from above, his will of necessity seems free, in the sense of being independent and self-originated: the reason being that man was *made after the image of God*. Gen. i. 26. God's will is free; that is, truly and substantially so. (See 8th Section of my Divine Inversion.) Man, therefore, as resembling God, has a will which without being truly and substantially free,—which it could not be without being *identitified* with that of God—is nevertheless apparently and shadowy so. But man's will cannot be really free, for two reasons:—1. It is the will of a creature; Dan. iv. 35; Acts ii. 23; iv. 28. 2. It is the slave of man's nature; James i. 13, 14. Therefore, *real* freedom of will, in the case of a creature like man, is altogether out of the question. From this admission of mine, however, it does not follow, that I pledge myself to swallow all the *dicta* of Lord Brougham, (see his inaugural address before the University of Glasgow,) or of others who may have chosen to adopt Socialist and Infidel notions on the subject. Pamph: pp. 8, 9.

6. "Divine Inversion" being, like every thing else that is superhuman, divinely revealed, rests upon principles which the mere human mind never could have discovered. This however, instead of being an argument against the doctrine, is, it appears to me, the most powerful argument in its favour. It is consistent

with, nay it is involved in, the very doctrine itself. See pamph : p. 9.

7. Referring to pages 9 and 10 of the Doctor's Examination, I observe, that my views do not in any respect whatever interfere with the claims and obligations of sound morality. Natural conscience is a part and portion of human nature. The more it is enlightened on its own principles, the more will the obligatory nature of morals be recognized, felt, and enforced. All that I maintain is, that valuable as is natural or fleshly conscience, it of necessity enforces moral conduct, or abstinence from evil, upon slavish principles. In the members of the church of God, and in them alone, exists the free, heaven-born, and divine principle of love. And love operating in them, not only produces in a superior way all that natural conscience does, but a vast deal more : seeing that it not merely causes negatively their abstinence from evil, but brings forth positively in them the peaceable fruits of righteousness ; nay, is productive in them of the crucifixion of the very principle of evil itself. Gal. v. 24. To quote from one of the interesting and instructive works of my friend, Mrs. Sherwood :—“ ‘The regenerate man, my Henry,’ said Mr. Dalben, ‘is under the influence of love, and love is a living, active principle, and worketh all good to its neighbour ; and he that hath it must do the will of God, not in order that he may thereby obtain salvation, but because he is already saved.’ ” Henry Milner, Part iv. p. 361. Blessed be God, however, even where divine love does not exist, God has not “left himself without a witness,” and without the means of restraining from evil. Slavish as the principles of fleshly conscience are, society is benefited by their existence and operation ; and, in the absence of higher principles, human beings will always by them be more or less influenced. The gospel never interferes with them in the unregenerate ; and only, in the regenerate, by the implantation in them of principles more efficacious.

8. My friendly critic says, “I could wish to be informed what morality has to do with life in another world.” P. 11. So could I. As to this point, then, we are thoroughly at one, although, from the way in which the remark is introduced, one might suppose

that we differed.—By the way, judging from other parts of his pamphlet, the Doctor, somewhat inconsistently with himself, seems to represent human morals as of the nature of an introduction to the heavenly kingdom. See p. 12, p. 15, at bottom, &c. &c.—The highest objects at which I can conceive it possible for a child of God to aim by the most correct moral conduct on his part, is *the glory of God*, 1 Cor. x. 31, and *the adorning of the doctrine of God his Saviour in all things*, objects attainable and attained in this world.

9. I grieve to see the Doctor, pp. 11 and 12, mistaking altogether my views and language as to the influence of my theory on morals. What I strive to express, and what I mean is, that in the case of unregenerate men my doctrine can produce no effect whatever, except it be to draw out towards it, and towards myself, the opposition and dislike of such parties; and that where such views as those which I contend for are received, as they are by members of the church of God, their influence is uniformly and necessary beneficial. They are, wherever received, connected with freedom from the slavery and love of sin; connected with the sweet, constraining, and purifying operation of the divine principle of love.

10. Certainly, I hold that salvation is unconditionally bestowed and enjoyed in the strictest sense of the term. Pamph. pp. 12—16. I am, as a matter of divinely revealed fact, righteous in Jesus' divine righteousness, Rom. v. 18, and living in Jesus' divine life, 1 Cor. xv. 22, just as it is a similarly revealed fact, that I am sinful in Adam's sin, Rom. v. 12, and dying in Adam's death. Ibid. Conditions of salvation have all been fulfilled by the Son of God. John xix. 30; Rom. x. 4. To me and to my fellow believers, therefore, divinely clear is the fact, that eternal life is "the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. vi. 23. And that as God's gift, it is ours. 1 John v. 11. If not ours, it would be because some condition yet remained to be fulfilled; and if any such condition existed, then it could not be a gift. To enjoy a blessing unconditionally or as a gift, and to enjoy it conditionally, are, it is obvious, self-contradictory ideas. But eternal life is God's

gift. Rom. vi. 23. It is therefore ours, and we know it to be so. *This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son.* 1 John v. 11. As to this view being inconsistent with scripture, which prescribed, and which is supposed still to prescribe conditions of salvation, I have elsewhere dealt with the objection. See the third of my "Dialogues." See also this present work. As to the allegation that the free bestowment and enjoyment of life everlasting is inconsistent with sound morality, I have no intention now to enter upon a formal refutation of it. Whenever it can be shewn, that the knowledge of my being the child of a loving, but firm and judicious parent, is calculated to prompt me to hate that parent, and to treat him in every conceivable way with disrespect, then, but not till then, may I feel disposed to hold parley with the objector. In the mean time, it is enough for me, in common with my fellow saints, to feel as well as to know, that instead of our knowledge of God's love to us provoking hatred to him, and a disposition to trample underfoot his authority on our part, it is productive, on the contrary, of our love to him, as having first loved us. 1 John iv. 19.

11. I do not say, in the sense which my friendly antagonist would suggest, that "what is morally good in man is hateful to God." Page 16. So far from so doing, I believe and maintain it to be incumbent upon every man—incumbent upon him by the very law of his nature—to abstain from what his conscience declares to him to be evil; and that only in as far as he is found doing so, will he escape the punishment of evil. As respects the life that now is, God, so far from being indifferent to good and evil, must always approve of the good and condemn the evil; and therefore so far from his hating, in the sense intimated, the doer of that which is morally good, he must visit him continually, in the course of his adorable providence, with tokens of most decided approbation.—What I mean and say is this:—that ordinary moral conduct, however correct, consisting merely in abstinence from evil, springs from fleshly mind, a mind opposed to God; and that whenever employed for self-righteous purposes,—as for instance, to fasten any obligation upon God to bestow on

the party, life everlasting,—it is immediately shewn to be, *for any such purpose*, the object of the divine disapprobation. Luke xviii. 9—14. As to this life, correct moral conduct is approved of God, as well as profitable to men; as to life everlasting, that is, regarded as in any respect whatever entitling to the divine favour hereafter, and being thereby put upon a level with the divine righteousness of Jesus Christ, moral conduct, however correct, becomes the object of divine condemnation. Compare Phil. iii. 4—7, with 1 Tim. i. 12—17.

12. Stating matters as I have just done, I find myself “placed” in no “dilemma” whatever, and have therefore none to “escape from.” Certain effects, according to the word of God, spring from flesh or human nature, Gal. v. 19—21, a nature which cannot inherit the kingdom of God. 1 Corinth. xv. 50. Certain other effects, according to the same word, spring from spirit or the divine nature, Gal. v. 22, 23, the nature which does enter into and inherit the kingdom. John iii. 3, 5, &c. &c. These are fundamental principles of God’s word. These are fundamental principles of the theory which my respected antagonist is pleased to style mine. In what dilemma then am I involved by maintaining that a nature, against the effects of which there is law, cannot enjoy a state or entitle itself to a kingdom which are freely conferred, along with that nature *against* the effects of which *there is no law?* Gal. v. 23. Page 17.

13. As a matter of fact God hath chosen to create human nature consisting of soulical body and soul. Gen. ii. 7. As a matter of fact he hath chosen to new-create human beings in his own Son, through the superseding of soulical body by spiritual body, and of soul by spirit. 1 Corinth. xv. 42—49; Phil. iii. 21; 1 Corinth. xv. 22; 1 Tim. iv. 10; Rev. xxi. 5. This we know. What for other purposes and under other circumstances God may have done or may intend to do, we know not. Divine revelation concerns us. That for us is enough. See John xxi. 22, 23.

14. Respecting what my antagonist the Doctor is pleased to say on the subject of man’s knowledge of God independently of divine teaching, pp. 19—21, I content myself with reasserting,

that all the knowledge of God, whether natural or supernatural, which has ever existed among men, is the result of divine revelation ; either directly as in the case of the Jews, or indirectly, that is traditionally, as in the case of the Gentile world. For proof of this I refer to the scriptures themselves, as well as to works quoted or alluded to in my different productions. I admit that man is so constituted *subjectively* as to be capable of acquiring the *fleshly knowledge* of God when presented to him *objectively*. *Fleshly knowledge* only, I say. For in order to become the recipient of *spiritual knowledge* he must be new-created *subjectively*, through the medium of the truth, *objectively* not only presented to him, but also operating upon him.—Again, to advert briefly to another of the Doctor's postulates : that man, when miraculously created, required to have miraculously conferred upon him ability to understand the language in which Deity condescended to address him, is to me, and must be to every man endowed with common sense and the most ordinary powers of reflection so clear, that I should be ashamed of myself were I to deem it necessary to make the slightest attempt to prove it.

15. See pp. 21 and 22. Revelation does not shrink from any assault which Reason can make upon it. With all the majesty of substance exposed to the impotent attacks of that which is merely shadow, it contents itself with suggesting to Reason the risque of its desperate and malignant efforts recoiling upon itself. The viper attempting to injure the file only injured its own mouth and tongue.—Observe, I speak only of that which is revelation. With false revelations and false pretenders to revelation I have no concern. Reason may do with them what it pleases. (May it not be worth while however quietly to suggest to it, that for ability to do this, albeit it knows it not, it is indebted to Revelation?) The Revelation of God, made known to his church through the scriptures, no more favours priests and priestcraft than it favours infidelity.

16. "The man whose soul knows not the quickening of the divine Spirit while in the flesh, sinks both body and soul into the grave, only to become the tenant of oblivion and annihilation to

eternity." Thus speaks the Doctor at page 24 of his pamphlet, professing to give an abstract of my sentiments. Now, in my work I maintain no such proposition as that which he imputes to me, *but the very reverse*. The doctrine advocated by me is, *as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive*. 1 Cor. xv. 22. Annihilation! why one of my grand objects is to establish its impossibility. See especially Appendix B. pp. 273—276, of my "Divine Inversion," the very work on which my learned critic is animadverting. How Doctor Weatherill can have so decidedly mistaken and misrepresented my views, it is difficult to say. Perhaps, I may not have expressed myself with sufficient distinctness and precision. And yet the salvation of all, not the annihilation of any, is the theme—the grand, the prominent, the inspiring theme of all my later productions.

17. "Mr. Thom believes in the existence of original sin." I am not fond of the phrase "original sin," nor am I aware that latterly I have been in the habit of using it. See pamphlet, pages 25 and 26, also 29. Let others answer for their notions as to this point. I am not answerable for them. It is enough for me, that man's nature wherever it is found, and whether old or young, is *of the earth, earthy*; 1 Cor. xv. 47, with Gen. ii. 7; and that Adam's *one* transgression, (not *first*, but *one* transgression,) is regarded and acted on by God as the transgression of the *one* nature: what earthy nature prompted to in Adam, being what earthy nature would, under similar circumstances, have prompted to in all. The one transgression of Adam did not *render* man's nature earthy; it merely *evinced* it to be so. And, blessed be God, as we all stand guilty before him and are punished with the forfeiture of this life on the ground of the *one* transgression of the creature, so do we all stand righteous before God, and are made partakers of life everlasting, on the ground of the *one* righteousness of the Creator. See Rom. v. 12, *to the end*.

18. I do not believe in the introduction of sin by God himself, as is charged against me by my critic, the Doctor. Page 29. God created man earthy; God gave to that earthy man a divine law; and the earthy man broke the law. Sin thus has proceeded from

the creature, and is exclusively the creature's act. Instead, then, of the conclusion being as Doctor W. alleges, that sin is eternal, it is that sin as a creature act must be involved in the fate of the creature nature. And so it is. In the death of Christ sin was ended, by being swallowed up in his divine righteousness; just as in the resurrection of Christ creature nature was ended, by being swallowed up in his divine nature. Besides all this, I demur to the Doctor's premises, "that whatever God creates must be eternal." The very reverse I believe to be fact. See Ps. cii. 25—27, quoted in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The old creation and all that is connected with it passes away, after having served its purposes. It is the new creation, a creation from which sin and all the effects of sin are excluded, that supersedes the old and is established before God for ever. Ps. civ. 35; Isa. lxx. 17; 2 Cor. v. 17; Rev. xxi. 3—5. also 27; xxii. 15.

Doctor Weatherill will I think find, that in what I have just stated, are either given or are involved answers to his various objections. From him then, after again thanking him for his courtesy, I turn,

II.—To Mr. TOWNLEY.

With my friend's general notions, except in so far as they form the grounds of his attack upon my "Divine Inversion," I have nothing to do. And his numerous sneers at the system of divine truth for which I contend, such for instance, as that at the bottom of page 151 of his work, I pass over, with merely an expression of regret that they should have been penned. A somewhat profounder acquaintance with divine truth than my respected antagonist yet possesses, may shew him that not only were they unmerited, but that, from the acerbity of feeling which they betray, they have more the appearance of springing from personal dislike, and of his having been galled by the system which they assail, than of having had their origin in deep, serious, and comprehensive views of the meaning of Scripture.

Mr. Townley's note has one great advantage: it numbers his grounds of objection to my views. I have therefore only to follow

him through these, as they are successively and very distinctly laid down by him.

He divides what he has to say into two parts : first, a defence of his friends the Salemites ; and secondly, a series of direct assaults upon my doctrines.

I.—Defending the views of his friends, he says,

1. “Throughout the Bible a church implies service ; and where there is service there must be servants, officers, priests, and deacons ; and where these are, they must be of divine appointment.” Suppose I grant this as holding true of every *external* body spoken of in the scriptures. Does it thence follow either, 1st. that an *internal* church cannot exist? or 2nd, that if such a church can exist, it must, although itself *internal*, have an *external* service, *external* office-bearers, &c. ?—“A church,” says my friend, “implies in one word conditionality.” Yes ; such a church, or such churches as Mr. Townley alludes to ; but not that of which I speak. And when a heavenly and internal church, the very basis of the existence of which is the fulfilment of all *conditions* of salvation by the Son of God, shall be proved to be necessarily *conditional*, then, but not till then, may I be placed at the bar on a charge of *conditionalizing* the Word of God.—More I might say respecting the *conditionalizing* nature and tendencies of Salemite doctrine ; but I forbear.

2. Surely my friend must have read carelessly the very words which he quotes. I, no more than he does, contend for “‘a blotting out’ of the reign of the Messiah.” My words are, “a blotting out” of his reign “*as spiritual Abraham*.” This alters the case completely. I acquit Mr. T. of all intentional misrepresentation. Only, in animadverting on the language of another, he should pay a little more attention to what the subject of his animadversions actually says.

Mr. Townley thinks that 1 Cor. xv. 22—28 contradicts my assertion as to Jesus appearing first as head of the church, or elected body, before appearing ultimately as head of all. Persons may surely think differently as to this matter. The passage in question appears to me “confirmation” of my view “strong as holy writ” can make it. An “order” beginning with *one*, extend-

ing to *some*, and ultimately taking in *all*, (God only excepted, who “did put all things under him,”) is, it strikes me, fairly considered, inexplicable on any other interpretation than that which I have given. However, *trêve de cela*. To “the law and the testimony”, and to the church taught by that law and that testimony, I make my appeal.

Pardon me, my friend: the question is not what I may have thought or said thirteen or seventeen years ago, when my views of divine truth were less enlightened and scriptural than they are at present; but what have I said in my “Divine Inversion”? the work expressly selected by you for attack.

It strikes me that my friend rather shirks—let me use, because I wish to do so, a milder phrase, *avoids meeting*—my position as to Jesus being both spiritual Abraham and spiritual Adam.—Will he permit me to ask from him distinct and categorical answers to the following queries:—1st. Is not our Lord, who in the 1st of Matthew is spoken of as Abraham’s descendant, and as such of the kindred of the Jews, also in Luke iii., spoken of as Adam’s descendant, and as such of kin to all? 2nd. Is not Jesus, who is set before us as spiritual Abraham in Acts ii., Romans iv., Ephesians i., 1 Peter i. 23, &c. &c., also set before us as spiritual Adam, in Romans v. 12—21, 1 Cor. xi. 3, (*the head of every man, παντος ανδρος, is Christ,*) 1 Cor. xv. 22, 45, 1 Tim. iv. 10, Heb. ii. 9, &c. &c.? 3rdly. Is the representation of Jesus as spiritual Abraham, the same thing as the representation of him as spiritual Adam? If you say so, prove it from scripture. It will not do to say, “spiritual Adam or Abraham.” I believe that God has recorded nothing in vain. If Abraham the father of the faithful had been a sufficient type of Christ, why also speak of our Lord as Adam, 1 Cor. xv. 45, or as the antitype of the being who is naturally the father of us all? Is not such a representation, could we adopt your principles, puzzling and perplexing—incapable of being satisfactorily explained?—Observe, I know that he who is spiritual Abraham is also spiritual Adam. It is the same glorious being who is both. (See my second Dialogue.) What I beg to call your attention to is, that Adam

was the ancestor, not of a part merely, but of the whole of the human race naturally; and that to call Jesus, Adam, is,—if the type has any meaning at all, and if we are not to involve every thing in confusion,—to point to him as the ancestor, not of a part, but of the whole human race supernaturally. It is upon this principle we explain Christ's character as spiritual Abraham, or head of the church. Why apply a different principle to our Lord when spoken of as spiritual Adam, by denying him to be head of every man? 1 Cor. xi. 3. And this, too, in the teeth of the Holy Ghost's own inspired interpretation, in *Ibid.* xv. 22?

3. Will my friend excuse me if, while I profess my admiration of his acuteness, I express myself rather surprised at the summary and somewhat contemptuous way in which he dismisses my statement that “they,” the Salemites, “do not seem to apprehend how the resurrection of the body which we now have may be held, while yet we deny that it is raised a flesh and blood body?” This he does by quoting from John iii. 6, and 1 Cor. xv. 50. The force of this quotation, if it have any force at all in opposition to my views, being, that I maintain the possibility of flesh begetting something else than flesh, and of flesh and blood inheriting the kingdom of God. Now, my dear friend, in what part of my works can you point to me as maintaining either the one or the other of these unscriptural notions? Where do I say,—where do I even insinuate,—that flesh or fleshly mind can beget spirit, or that flesh and blood can enter into the heavenly kingdom? Is it not the grand object of all that I have written to shew that flesh cannot rise above itself, and that sowing to the flesh of necessity results, and can only result, in the reaping of corruption? True, I maintain that God manifest in flesh, through obedience to divine law, and through that crowning act of obedience to it, the sacrifice of himself, hath swallowed up flesh in spirit in himself; and by that mighty power whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself, swallows it up likewise in the case of others. But I have yet to learn that the superseding of flesh by spirit on the part of the Creator, which I do contend for, 1 Cor. xv. 49, Phil. iii. 21, is the same thing as flesh raising itself to the possession and enjoy-

ment of the heavenly kingdom, and clothing itself with everlasting existence,—positions which, in whatever form they may be proposed, I loathe, repudiate, and utterly deny. See 2 Cor. v. 17; Rev. xxi. 5. Under these circumstances, why triumphantly exclaim, as you do, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, that which is born of the flesh *is* flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit *is* spirit, and flesh and blood can *not* inherit the kingdom of God.” (The Italics are your own.) What other object can this have but to represent me as contradicting the very truths which I unreservedly and unqualifiedly maintain and glory in?—“But the Bible tells another tale.” What! That flesh only can produce flesh, and Spirit only can produce spirit, and that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, are doctrines which constitute the very staple of my works. They are doctrines for the assertion of which I have suffered persecution, and been turned out of an Established Church. You can scarcely help knowing this. For have you not read the charges of heresy brought against me in 1825? Have you not read several of my productions? To come nearer to the point, have you not read my “Divine Inversion,” and especially section seventh of that work? There the very doctrine of the impossibility of flesh rising to spirit—the doctrine which *te judice* is the doctrine of the Bible—is expressly and at some length asserted. And yet, in your anxiety to screen your friends the Salemites—a very amiable and praiseworthy feeling, I admit—you represent me as on this very point contradicting the scriptures. “The Bible tells another tale;” whereas I assert exactly what the Bible does! My dear Mr. Townley, is such conduct on your part fair?—As to your denying that what is now flesh and blood body is new-created in Jesus glorified as spiritual body, it is enough for me to answer you in the words of the inspired apostle:—*This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality; 1 Cor. xv. 53; and if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his spirit that dwelleth in you. Rom. viii. 11.* These passages, and others of similar import might be produced likewise, asserting in the

most express terms that what appears naturally in an inferior form is clothed upon supernaturally with a superior one—that what is mortal in time is immortal in eternity—to contradict such divinely-revealed facts involves you, my dear friend, in a dispute not with a paltry worm of the dust like the writer of this, but with him whose creatures both you and I are.

Having completed his defence of the Salemites, Mr. Townley then proceeds,

II. To a series of direct assaults upon doctrines held, or supposed by him to be held by me.

His charges against me are,

1. My holding, according to him, three advents of Christ. To this I answer distinctly and straight-forwardly, that, in my apprehension, the advents of our blessed Lord are only two in number. First, that which occurred when he became manifest in flesh; and, secondly, that which will occur when he comes to terminate this present world, and introduce his church into the full enjoyment of the heavenly glory. As, however, the first coming of Christ threw out its shadows before, or afforded an earnest of its future occurrence in the natural creation of Adam, Romans v. 14, and in the ceremonial institutions of the Jews, Coloss. ii. 16, 17, Heb. ix., so does the second coming of Christ throw out an earnest of its future occurrence, in that communication of the principle and first fruits of his ascension and glorified mind which constitutes in New Testament times the portion of all his believing people. Reckoning the two earnest of the two advents as themselves advents likewise, you are welcome, my dear friend, to charge me with holding four advents if you please. To me, nevertheless, there are but two.—In explanation of what I have said in my “Three Questions,” first published in 1828, and afterwards republished in 1835, which is cast in my teeth by Mr. Townley, I would just observe, that I was then led partially into error by confounding the earnest of Christ’s second coming, which began to take effect from the period of Jerusalem’s destruction, with his second coming itself.

2. Excuse me, my dear Mr. Townley, if I suggest that your great and acknowledged acuteness has here betrayed you, unintentionally I am sure, into something like what is called "catching at a man's words." I have no doubt expressed myself, in one part of my "Divine Inversion," as you represent me to have done. A modification of my language is, I admit, required, in order with perfect accuracy to convey my meaning. And yet, after all the reflection which I have been capable of bestowing upon the subject, I cannot see the *grossness* of the inconsistency into which you seem to think I have fallen. The Book of Revelation does appear to me to "*consist of information respecting the then approaching salvation of the church*, and of contrasts between the state of reconciliation and that of salvation." Throughout that wondrous book I find also hints of still deeper principles, upon which these contrasts rest, and by which they are to be explained. That is, besides its *relative* disclosures, there are *absolute* truths propounded in it, as the basis on which the former rest, and the source whence they flow. The word "*whole*" is what I perceive you cavil at. An addition to what I have said, of the clause, "accompanied with hints of the principles of that information and of these contrasts, or of those profound divine facts of which all phenomena secular and religious are the results," will complete the idea which was in my mind when I wrote the words animadverted on, and which I have elsewhere more than once expressed. This clause, or some corresponding one,—with a view to meet the objections of friends so acute, and so anxious for the perfect self-consistency of my statements as you are,—when I have occasion to speak of the Book of Revelation again, I must be careful not to omit.

3. I confess myself unable to understand the point of Mr. Townley's attack under this head. I have said—I do say—that "no external or earthly church of Christ has existed since the days of the apostles and the period of Jerusalem's subversion." And yet, I not only denied to Mr. Townley privately, but I now deny publicly in print, "that Christ has come a second time." (Why, dear friend, take notice of a private conversation,

when you have my published works denying the same thing to refer to?) Wherein, however, is self-contradiction here apparent? Have the goodness to shew me. — “No, he affirms this,” (that is, that Christ *hath come* the second time.) “He affirms, and yet he denies: it is so, and it is not so.” Where do I affirm that Christ hath come the second time, in my “Divine Inversion,” the work now under consideration? I have only affirmed, as I do affirm, that the members of Christ’s internal, heavenly, and spiritual church,—the only church he now has, or can have,—have enjoyed, and do enjoy, in the manifestation of the truth to their consciences by the Holy Ghost, that which is to them the earnest of Christ’s second coming. 2 Cor. v. 1—5, Ibid. 17, compared with Rev. xxi. 5. When I thus so distinctly deny in private *te teste*, and in public, that Christ’s second coming hath taken place, and yet affirm the enjoyment by anticipation of the earnest of that second coming by all the members of his church while on earth,—*two different things*, you must admit,—is it, dear friend, kind, is it consistent with perfect candour in you, to represent me as affirming and yet denying *the same thing*? Are you justified in charging me, in reference to this matter, with “blowing hot and cold in the same breath”?

4. As to what Mr Townley says respecting my having “no ordinance of the Lord’s Supper in” my “chapel,” he may find the answer virtually involved in the principles laid down by me in the last section. To us to whom Christ hath revealed himself as head of a spiritual church of which we are members, and to whom he hath thus come in spirit in the earnest of his second glorious advent, it appears that external ordinances are, like external churches, by that very fact shewn to be ended. Those who think otherwise, if taught from above at all, we bear with, on the principles laid down in Romans, chapter fourteenth. That is, provided that the ordinances which they continue to observe have been, at one time, in reality of divine institution; such as baptism and the Lord’s supper: not otherwise.—Instead of your saying,—pardon me, if I remark, somewhat harshly,—that our “*theory* is far from perfect,” supposing us to be wrong, would not the word “*practice*,” think you, have been the more appropriate term?

5. I have yet to learn from the inspired volume the impossibility of the saints of God now enjoying the earnest of the spiritual and glorified mind of the Lord Jesus. My friend Mr. Townley's *dictum*, that "this also is vanity, a faith which clashes with the plainest declarations of scripture," is, he must be aware, no proof whatever on the subject, and cannot be accepted by me as such; especially in the teeth of all those passages of God's word which speak of "the earnest of the Spirit," and "the witness of the Spirit," and "the sealing of the Spirit," as being privileges of the whole body of believers. As to miracles and miraculous influences, my friend is, I presume, well aware that I understand them to have passed away with the apostolic age. The earnest of the Spirit, therefore, for which I contend as the privilege of the church now, is not the miraculous form of it which existed in the days of the apostles, but that permanent form of it consisting in the enjoyment of the principles of divine light and divine love, which is the portion of the saints, until time shall be no more.

6. Mr. Townley must be aware that I do not undertake to communicate to others the knowledge of divine truth. To do so is God's prerogative, not mine. *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.* Matt. xiii. 9. These words are uttered by him who said, *Let there be light*; and as he himself alone was competent to give effect to his word in this latter case, so also in the former. As *there was light* resulted necessarily from the one command, so *the ear to hear* results with equal necessity from the other. I can only state in human language, and pointing to the scriptures as my authority for what I say, what appears to myself to be divinely true. In so doing I can only reach the outward ear, and the fleshly understanding. To be heard internally, or through the medium of the new creation of the understanding, is the result not of creature effort or creature ability, but of God himself carrying home his own truth with power to the heart and conscience.—By the way, it is a little too much for my friend to assume that this present world shall continue for ever, and to denounce as an "unscriptural dogma" my position that "this visible system of things" shall have an end. Above all, when

such passages as 2 Peter iii. 10—12, and Rev. xxi. 5, *Behold, I make all things new*, are staring him in the face and reclaiming against him. Such passages he and his friends, I am well aware, attempt to explain away. But why not stop there? Why, not content with imagining yourself to have shewn that the texts alluded to have been misunderstood when interpreted with reference to the termination of this present state of things, venture to assert positively that it shall be perpetuated for ever? Suppose I require you to prove *from scripture* the immortality of a system of things which confessedly had a beginning, and which confessedly has been loaded with sin. How would you set about it? How, with God himself expressly declaring to his own Son, *Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands; they shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment, as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed*, Psalm cii. 25, 26, would you convict the All-wise of having committed a mistake with regard to this matter?—"Mr. Thom," you say, "holds the non-immortality of the soul." So I do. But permit me to say, my friend, that you know,—I speak advisedly,—that I deny the immortality of the soul or fleshly mind, just because I affirm the immortality of Spirit or divine mind, through which soul is new-created. 1 Cor. xv. 45—49. You know this, because you have read, and read with care too, works of mine in which this doctrine is again and again repeated. Why then throw out the insinuation in the form in which it appears in your Note? Why merely state that I deny the soul's immortality and stop there? I see clearly that it answers your purpose to do so. And yet I find it difficult to persuade myself that to expose me to unmerited obloquy was Mr. Townley's purpose.—Again: sects maintaining the immortality of soul are supposed by Mr. Townley to object, "How does Mr. Thom make out his universalism, while holding annihilation and purgatory?" An objection which Mr. Townley makes his own, by adding, "For I can find no one who can explain this part of his creed to me." Now, friend Townley, I hold neither "annihilation" nor "purgatory". Can I suppose you,

acute as I know you to be, and carefully as I perceive you to have gone over my works, to be ignorant of this? Why then express yourself as you have done? Surely, my dear friend, this is anything but to deal fairly with me. So far from holding annihilation, other parts of the Note under review shew you to be aware that,—whether right or wrong is not now the question,—I hold the doctrine of Christ making all persons new; that is, giving to all persons everlasting existence, *the opposite of annihilation*, in himself. Acts xvii. 28, 1 Cor. xv. 22. Have not you read also my brief exposure of the annihilation theory, in Appendix B of the “Divine Inversion”? And so far from holding purgatory,—a mere improvement of the old or human nature in a higher state,—other parts of the Note under review shew you to be aware that I hold the doctrine of the new creation of human beings in Jesus Christ glorified; a doctrine which, as laid down by the Holy Ghost and acquiesced in by me, implies, not the purifying and thereby the continuation of old things, but the passing of old things away and the making of all things new. 2 Cor. v. 17, Rev. xxi. 3—5. You may not understand me: that I can easily believe. But this at all events you do understand, that, giving me the benefit of my own words,—the only way in which you are entitled to judge of my sentiments,—I hold neither annihilation nor purgatory.—The last sentence of the paragraph commented on is, I do not say exactly profane, but I wish that for your own sake you had omitted it.

7. My friend and I are here decidedly at variance. “I maintain,” says Mr. Townley, “that the all in all state was opened up at the fall of Jerusalem, not, as Mr. Thom would say, in the sense of a beginning of something which is progressive in its manifestations, but in the sense of manifestation full, complete, perfect, and conclusive, denying all progression and change. I can see nothing but absurdity in the reflection which Mr. Thom is constrained to offer on such passages as 1 Thess. iv. 13—17.” Were I inclined to bandy harsh expressions I might say, and say with truth, that the absurdity was all on the side of my friendly critic. But I forbear. Expressions of an unkind and disparaging description I

wish as much as possible to avoid. They cannot do good.—If, my friend, you mean in what you say, that at the period of the fall of Jerusalem the inspired writings were complete, *you are right*. If you mean that to the members of the church a view of all in all state began to be opened up at that period, *you are right likewise*. But going beyond the completeness of revelation *objectively* considered, and beyond the opening up of the completeness of God's purposes to his chosen ones at and since the period alluded to, you contradict fact, and plunge yourself, I will not say into absurdity, but into a perfect abyss of error. As a matter of fact, the scriptures are not opened up *subjectively* yet in all their fulness of meaning to God's chosen ones. As a matter of fact, they are not opened up in their meaning to the unregenerate world at all. "A manifestation full, complete, perfect, and conclusive!" What! The Salemites themselves, by their own shewing, growing in knowledge! My friend Mr. Townley also growing in knowledge! This, in the sense of a full *subjective* manifestation of Jehovah, a manifestation unsusceptible of increase, having existed for 1800 years, is a sheer impossibility. And yet, unless this be Mr. Townley's meaning, he admits "progression and change"! *All in all* means fulness of manifestation on the part of God to all. But no such thing now exists. The assertion of it contradicts fact, and contradicts the experience even of those who make it.

But I take up Mr. Townley on another ground. "This," says he, "is the all in all state." All in all state now? Why, if you are going to push this view out to its legitimate extent, the proper expression of it is not that it is the all in all state now, but that there never has been anything else than the all in all state. (A thing by the way, *absolutely speaking*, true. Exodus iii. 14; Psalm xc. 2; Hebrews xiii. 8; James i. 17.) For the all in all state not only excludes progression and change now, as the Salemites and Mr. Townley assert, but excludes progression and change at all periods and under all circumstances. Every argument therefore which my friend can adduce against a state of progression existing now, may with the greatest ease and pertinency be urged against

a state of progression having ever existed at all. An "all in all state opened up," or "commencing at the fall of Jerusalem!" Why, my dear Mr. Townley, do you not see the—I had almost said absurdity—the inconsistency with fact of such an idea? An all in all state, absolutely considered, has neither beginning nor end. It therefore could not be opened up. It has ever existed. It must ever exist. And that unchanged and unchangeable. You allow progression and change before the fall of Jerusalem. You suppose an all in all state, exclusive of progression and change, then to have been opened up. That is, you suppose a state which by its very nature is *exclusive of change*, to have come into existence as *itself a part of an order of things which implies change!* How is this possible?—Remember that you have here only one alternative. Either you hold the all in all state as absolute and irrespective of progression altogether, in which case you carry it back not to the destruction of Jerusalem but to the beginning of time, rather into eternity itself;—or admitting progression, notwithstanding the existence absolutely considered of an all in all state, ever to have existed, you play the game into my hands.

What I say, and say without any equivocation whatever, (pardon me, if I inquire respectfully if the phrase "Mr. T.'s equivocating denial," be quite gentlemanlike and becoming a Dublin University A. B.?) is, that absolutely considered, there is and there can be no change in Jehovah himself; and that in connexion with his unchangeable nature and character there exists a state of things which, like himself, is unchangeable also. This is the all in all state. What I say farther, and say without any equivocation whatever is, that this state of things, in itself unchangeable, is capable of progressive, and therefore changing manifestation to the children of men; or, that the state of things in itself unchangeable becomes, in its manifestation to changeable beings, itself changeable, in the sense of its being gradually and progressively developed. Can I express myself more distinctly? More unequivocally? In three progressive stages do I see this all in all or unchangeable state, in scripture developed. In Paradise, with relation to Adam; in Palestine, with relation to the Jews; and throughout the world.

with relation to mankind in general. My friend admits progression in the manifestation of the divine character up to the fall of Jerusalem, or in the two former stages. There, all at once, he takes a bound or start. Instead of seeing that the all in all state was then opened up merely in the highest sense in which it was capable of being so to creatures in flesh, he understands then a fulness of manifestation which is exclusive of the possibility of all additions whatever. "A manifestation full, complete, perfect, and conclusive, denying all progression and change." The progression, the possibility of any increase of knowledge, according to him, at the fall of Jerusalem ended. Man—I beg his pardon, the church—I beg his pardon again, certain human beings—then came to see and enjoy God as all in all. Suppose I admit such a manifestation to certain human beings. What then! Has progression in reality ended? Did all who were to see him as all in all, then do so? Certainly not. For in succeeding ages men have been seeing him to be so. Here then, Mr. Townley being judge, is progression.—Again: do all who see him to be all in all make that discovery at once? Certainly not. There was a time when the Salemites, and when my friend Mr. Townley, did not see him in his all in all character. (Supposing them, by the way, to do so, which I confess I much doubt.) Well then, here also is progression.—Still farther: do all now see him to be what he is? Certainly not. Why then, this being the case, there is at least a *possibility* of farther progression in regard to them. And what I state as *possibility* is actually to be realised as fact, God himself declaring so. *God willeth that all men be saved, (literally,) and come to the knowledge of the truth.* 1 Tim. ii. 4. And *Christ gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified, or a testimony, in the times, or seasons, proper to each.* Ibid. 6. Then, but not till then, will God *progressively considered* be "all in all." (The very words themselves, *all in all*, shew the correctness of my view and the incorrectness of my friend's: for according to my view, God is fully and finally and completely developed *through all*, and *to all*, and *in all*. Whereas according to my friend's, he is only made known in and to a *part* of the human race; those who regard him

as *all in all* upon my friend's principles, committing evidently the blunder of taking a *part* for the *whole*.) And when God shall be manifested as all in all, then—but not, dear Mr. Townley, till then—will the principle of progressive manifestation as connected with creature mind be seen swallowed up in complete, unchangeable, and everlasting manifestation, as the attribute of divine mind.

Dear friend, is there any equivocation in these statements of mine? If so, have the goodness to point it out.

“‘It is’ and ‘it is not’ comes in at every turn.” Well, suppose that it does. Are all distinctions on every subject repudiated by my friend Mr. Townley? Most assuredly not. He is too good a logician to be ignorant of their value, and, when requisite, to abstain from employing them. “It is so and so,” “it is not so and so,” I find pervading his work. Do I blame him for this? No. For I am aware that it is impossible to write accurately on any topic without having recourse to such distinctions. To write on any topic? Why, that it is impossible to hold a five minutes’ conversation without employing them. But if so, why does my friend censure me for saying “it is so absolutely considered;” “it is not so relatively or progressively considered?” Does this furnish my friend with a ground for charging me with equivocation, or a tendency to falsehood? Do, my dear Mr. Townley, avoid such—carping in future.

“If the all in all state is not opened up in the sense of perfect and entire manifestation so as to exclude all progression and change, then there must be a ministry, and that too miraculously commissioned.” (I omit what follows, from a dislike again to copy what I am sure it must be painful to yourself to have written.) Have the goodness to prove this, my dear friend. You know that mere assertion will not do. To quote your own words, omitting the offensive epithet already objected to, “Mr. Townley’s denial must go for what it really is,—a mere assertion, unsustained by a shadow of proof.” To me the *objective* manifestation of the divine character in the scriptures being complete, it appears that God has thereby not obscurely intimated his having reserved to himself alone, not conceded to a ministry, the power of opening

up that complete *objective* manifestation, progressively in a *subjective* sense, in the hearts and consciences of his chosen people.

Mr. Thom "writes himself 'minister.'" If this word be obnoxious to you, I am willing to abandon it. Assign to me any designation you please. *Argumenta ad hominem* however, as you know, do not touch the real point in controversy between us. Let us, if we can, get rid of them. They tend to no other end than to excite unpleasant feelings.

"*His*" (Mr. Thom's,) "*real aim is to establish a ministry.*" I print your words in Italics, as you yourself have printed them. How you have come to fancy yourself thus intimately acquainted with my inward views and motives I cannot tell. This however I can tell you, that in the object which you have chosen thus publicly and gratuitously to impute to me, you are most grievously mistaken. My aim is exactly *the opposite* of that which you declare to be mine. If there be one thing more dear to my heart than another—one thing which, more than another, I have had in view in my different publications—it is and has been to be instrumental in God's hands to point the minds and attention of men away from human ministries, from priests and priestcraft of every description, to my dear and glorified Redeemer, the Great High Priest and sole Instructor of his church, speaking directly in his own most blessed word. See my "Irving Miracles, pp 13—14," my preface to Barclay's "Without Faith, without God," &c. &c.

The third part of my present work Mr. Townley will find to be an answer, although not formally yet in reality, to his challenge, as given in the following words:—"I submit to Mr. Thom what I have submitted to all sects, to fill up their assumed intermediate state between the apostolic and the perfect." In the portion of my work alluded to, Mr. Townley may observe, that, taught by God's own word, I can distinguish between the earnest of the perfect and the perfect itself—between our being conformed in mind so far to the Son of God, and our being conformed to him entirely in body as well as mind. God does not in his manifestation of himself advance *per saltum*. He proceeds gradually. Taught by his example, I am satisfied to represent him as advancing from inferior

to superior degrees of self-manifestation, until, progression ending with creature nature, the fulness and unchangeableness of self-manifestation, on the part of Jehovah, is seen to swallow up all.

“It is idle to say ‘there is, and yet there is not.’ This is only calculated to deceive the simple-minded.” The not very gentleman-like insinuation conveyed in these words, I am sure, upon reflection, my friend, Mr. Townley, would wish unsaid.

“Mr. Thom’s Universalism resolves itself, to all appearance, into a ‘yea and nay’ gospel: a ‘supposition’ Christianity, as a friend happily styled it.” I have wished to avoid bandying epithets with my respected antagonist, and, therefore, I abstain from expressing, what had almost flowed from my pen, my opinion respecting the “supposition” character of another system of religion, (can I call it Christianity?) with which I happen to have some little acquaintance.—Dear friend, you are a younger man than I am; therefore, do take a small piece of advice from a senior. Avoid, as much as possible, all approaches to what might be construed into personality. Well do I know the difficulty of acting on this advice likely to be experienced by one whose temperament is so ardent as your own. To act upon it, however, might do you good. *Haud inexpertus loquor.*—“A ‘yea and nay’ gospel.” Ah! dear friend, is there not conceivable something even worse than this, namely, a system of religion *which is no gospel at all?*

Mr. Townley is pleased to say, “If I am to be a believer in Universalism, I must have a widely different statement from any which Mr. Thom propounds.” My friend has his choice among innumerable other systems of Universalism besides mine: such as Jeremiah White’s, the Chevalier Ramsay’s, Petit-pierre’s, Elhanan Winchester’s, Stonehouse’s, Relly’s, Murray’s, Neil Douglas’s, Huntington’s of Connecticut, &c., &c. Professor Bush is, I perceive, a favourite writer with him. He is also a favourite with the American universalists, a body which boasts of numbering among its adherents above 600,000 individuals, and which happens to agree with my friend in his notion of Christ’s second coming being past. Suppose I recommend to my friend’s notice the system advocated by these religionists, as brought out in the

writings of Ballou, Walter Balfour, Whittemore, T. J. Sawyer, and others. Or, seeing that he labours under considerable doubts respecting "soul," and respecting the punishment of the wicked hereafter, (doubts strangely inconsistent with his dogma of the existence now of a "manifestation full, complete, perfect, and conclusive, denying all progression and change,") and seeing, consequently, that there may exist in his mind a latent suspicion of there being something true in Universalism after all, suppose I use the freedom to suggest to him to construct a system of his own.—I never propounded my system as absolutely perfect. To the Father of Lights I continually look up for further instruction in divine things, through the instrumentality of his word. Nevertheless, I do venture to think, (I might express myself more strongly, but, in deference to the taste of the present day, which will only be content with the appearance of modesty, whether true or false, on the part of authors, I use this language,) that the system brought out by me in my various writings, especially in my later ones, is somewhat more consistent with scripture, and with itself, than any previously devised and concocted. And yet, have I anticipated a different reception for it than that which it has met with? No. Believing, as I do, that *flesh lusteth against spirit, and spirit against flesh, these two being contrary the one to the other*, (Gal. v. 17,) I never anticipated a wide and general reception of the views which I have propounded (in the main God's views,) on the part of the learned, the intelligent, and the fleshly pious. On the contrary, the more spiritual, that is, the more true and divine my views are, the more have I counted on, the more do I count on, their being offensive to fleshly mind, whatever form that mind may assume. Matt. xvi. 23; John viii. 45; Rom. viii. 7; 1 John iii. 1, 2. (See Preface to my "Three Questions," second edition; Epistle Prefatory to my "Dialogues;" and section seventh of my "Divine Inversion.") My friend, Mr. Townley, will therefore perceive that I am prepared for, and can without the slightest irritation listen to, such remarks respecting my system as those which he has seen meet to make. I take them, considering the quarter from whence they come, as of the

nature of a compliment to its truth—an indirect and unintentional one, to be sure. And yet I must add, in justice to myself, as well as to my friend, the following:—From Mr. Townley I am not only willing, but eager to learn. Let him propound truth. Let him, uncaptivated by a plausible and ingenious but baseless human theory, speak under the influence of the mind of God. Nay, let him, in so speaking,—not in sporting mere paradoxes,—correct errors into which as a human being, and as of necessity entertaining limited views of divine truth, I must have fallen. Let him do this, and then he will not, I trust,—however unwilling human beings may be to say *peccari*,—find me inclined to reject his statements in the lump, or to speak of him and his writings in a way that may fairly be deemed contemptuous.

Will my friend pardon me, if I suggest to him that his admissions in the passage beginning, “In fact, I must know something clearer of the *soul* than I have ever yet read,” are scarcely consistent with the tone of dogmatism which throughout his work, and especially throughout the Note animadverted on, he has assumed? He feels himself in want of clearer notions respecting *soul*, stating his agreement with Mr. Bush, “that on no subject are we more in the dark than in regard to” this. He denies his having adopted or expressed any fixed views as to the “annihilation of the wicked”—a declaration to which I attach implicit credit. Still the question arises—What in this case becomes of Mr. Townley’s “full, complete, perfect, and conclusive manifestation, denying all progression and change”? He says: “I can only state, that it is possible there may be punishment in the continued principle of the present existence of the ungodly in a future state.” “*Future state*”, dear friend! Why I had supposed that, according to you, we were now in the “all in all”, or *ever present and ever unchangeable state*. It seems that I have been mistaken. And yet, how reconcile the contradictory assertions? Were I disposed to act as my friend has done, I might urge something about the “is,” and the “is not;” but I forbear.—Again: “there *may be* punishment.” How can that be? I

mean, on your own principles. Why, Mr. Townley, as this world is to continue for ever according to you, and as you conceive us to have got into the all in all or unchangeable state already, your language should be, not "there may be punishment," or "there will be punishment,"—both of which propositions subvert your notion of an unchangeable state,—but "punishment in time to come is just such as is now undergone."—You deny "hell torments" as commonly understood. Well you may, if we be in the all in all state—punishment in time to come being, in that case, what exactly it is now.—"Let it be observed, that the after existence of the wicked does *not* depend upon an end of the world, a resurrection," &c. *After existence of the wicked!* How, to repeat what has been again and again said, can there be such "after" or future "existence," if this be the all in all or ever present unchangeable state? And further, how can this be, consistently with your sentiment of there being no resurrection of the body? Except in the case of God himself, distinct existence, without form or body of some kind or another, is an utter impossibility. Hence the church puts off the image of the earthy, not by being unclothed, but by being clothed upon with life, or by putting on the image of the heavenly. 1 Cor. xv. 49, 2 Cor. v. 4. But you laugh to scorn, as "unscriptural," the "tenet of a resurrection body." Why, dear Townley, do not your views tend towards something like Pantheism, or the confounding of the creature with the Creator?—"But, indeed, this very little concerns me in any way." Then why meddle with the subject at all? Why, especially, with views of your own confessedly unsettled, presume to condemn the settled views of others? Can *avowed ignorance* undertake to disprove *knowledge*? And all this, after having told us, and pretended to attack our views on the hypothesis, that your own divine "manifestation" was "full, complete, perfect, and conclusive, denying all progression and change." Stop, my dear friend. Be a little better acquainted with the subject, and a little more consistent with yourself, before you again venture to take up the strong ground in the way of denial, and to

employ the contemptuous modes of expressing yourself, which in your Note you have done.—“Annihilation is a curious expression.” So it is. But it is a word which is in use, and which was in use long before you and I were born; and without it, or some corresponding term, metaphysical and theological discussions could not be carried on. As to any charge or insinuation founded on it, whatever reference it may have to others, it cannot attach to persons who, like myself, believe that in God, revealed in Jesus Christ, all live for evermore.

As confirmatory of my friend's condemnation of Universalism, I am treated to a quotation from Professor Bush. It would have been more to the purpose, and more satisfactory to me, to have seen it—I mean the scriptural form of it, not Universalism with a fool's cap put upon it—condemned by the word of God. Particularly when I consider the unbounded reverence for the scriptures which Mr. Townley professes, and his boast of being exclusively guided by their decisions. However, the quotation is made for my benefit and the benefit of others, and—*valeat quantum*. Mr. Townley evidently dislikes Universalism. Hates it, perhaps would be the more appropriate term. Wherefore, I presume not to enquire. He himself should know best: but the fact is so. Hence his disposition to seize on every weapon by which he conceives himself likely to be able to annoy its supporters. The language of Professor Bush, a gentleman animated by a spirit very similar to his own, most happily and opportunely comes in to his aid.—Mr. Townley will forgive me, if I here press his conscience a little. Does he *really* believe with the American Professor—(does the Professor himself *really* believe)—that “if we were called upon to specify any form of alleged Christian doctrine, for which *the least* amount of evidence,” (observe, *the least*, in italics,) “could be adduced from the scriptures, it would be that of *the final universal salvation of the race?*” (The italics are not mine.) “For this we find *an entire lack*,” (the italics *are* mine,) “of positive scriptural evidence.” I say, does Mr. Townley *really* believe this? Does he, after his own admissions respecting

his ignorance of the nature of soul, his doubts as to future punishment, and *his pointed condemnation of hell torments, really believe* that Universalism is *the most baseless* of religious theories? (No shirking of this, my dear friend.) And if not, why quote Bush's language, and stamp it with his approbation? Besides, Mr. Townley knows that Mr. Bush is referring, in the words quoted, to the American system of Universalism, with which mine has scarcely any leading feature in common. Supposing, then, *argumenti causâ*, that Mr. Bush may be right in what he says respecting the one system, does it thence follow that his remarks have any application whatever to the other? and is Mr. Townley justified in quoting them as he does, without the slightest intimation of the *opposing nature* of two theories which it answers his purpose for the moment to identify? I bring no charge against my friend of "equivocating." But I certainly appeal to his own conscience as to the correctness of the line of conduct which he has seen meet to pursue.—Quoting Professor Bush, (still with approbation,) Mr. Townley says, "*moral character* must necessarily be the basis of *destiny*." Moral character, a life and conversation becoming the gospel, it is the high privilege of every child of God to cultivate and exhibit. But pardon me, dear friend Townley, if I suggest, that *the purpose which God purposed in himself before the world began, not the character of a creature, is the basis of destiny*, or rather, destiny itself; and if I state that, until now, I had always understood, not moral character, but the divine righteousness of Jesus Christ, to be that in which guilty creatures stand perfect and accepted before God.*

* Before looking into Professor Bush's work, I had some sort of a suspicion, judging from the quotations made, that the author had been bitten by, and had been borrowing from, the New Jerusalem or Swedenborgian theory. I have since discovered, by an actual perusal of the *Anastasis*, that I was right. Swedenborgianism is an old acquaintance of mine, and to its merits, in certain respects, I have not hesitated to bear testimony, in the Second Edition of my "Three Questions," and the sixth Section of my "Divine Inversion." To Mr. Noble, the able, amiable, and zealous writer of the "Appeal," &c., which I have read, I was at one time not altogether unknown. Swedenborgianism, however, is rather a ticklish theory for any one gifted with strong imagination and metaphysical acumen, and at the same time under the influence of no

Bush's little anecdote is a very pleasant one. Its conclusiveness against Universalism no fleshly mind can dispute. Unfortunately, however, it labours under the slight disadvantage of virtually, if not expressly, contradicting our Lord and his apostles: the former of whom has declared that he came to call, *not the righteous, but sinners to repentance*; Matt. ix. 13; that is, to make bad men good, for he himself gives the repentance; Acts v. 31; see also John xii. 32; and one of the latter of whom, besides asserting that *God who is just, is also the justifier of the ungodly*, Rom. iii. 26, iv. 5, v. 6—8, proposes his own case, which was that of the salvation of the chief of sinners, of one who had been *before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious,—a very bad man, who had been made a good one,—as a pattern of*

higher principles than those of fleshly mind, to meddle with. Owing to its adaptation to conditionalizing views of things, its pretended ability to lift the mind upwards into the regions of the unknown, its elegant and amusing fictions, its hanging tolerably well together, and its occasional exposure of popular fallacies, to clever men it often proves an edge-tool, with which, handling it unskilfully, they contrive to cut themselves.

The following extract from the "Intellectual Repository and New Jerusalem Magazine," for January, 1834, page 40, being the language of Mr. Noble, (to whom Mr. Bush, in his preface, acknowledges himself indebted,) may serve to shew those who know the truth what Swedenborgian sentiments are, and to put them on their guard against a system in which such sentiments are embodied. Mr. Noble is describing a sermon which he delivered on a week day, in the hearing of several of my friends and myself:—"Only one person went out during the discourse, though a considerable part of it was occupied in proving the free will of man, and the conditional character of the gospel dispensation; and the remainder of it in asserting the superiority of charity over faith, and the necessity to salvation of good works—all points which are perfectly abhorred by Mr. Thom and his people." How far Mr. Noble has understood my views I am not going to say: perhaps some may have difficulty in recognizing them in the above *caricatura*. Denying "the superiority of charity," or love, "over faith"! 1 Cor. xiii. 11. Does any one who knows me, and has read my works, believe this? See Irving Miracles, pp. 28, 29. This, however, I will say, that any person holding the absolute freedom of man's will, the conditionality of salvation or its dependence on the creature, and the necessity of good works as a ground of hope towards God, shewing himself by such doctrines to labour under the most complete ignorance of His character whose will alone is free and sovereign, of eternal life being His gift, and of good works flowing from the knowledge of salvation freely bestowed upon us, not being the ground of that privilege, puts us at once on our guard against himself and his general theory; and thus preserves us from being carried away by it, as Mr. Bush and some others appear to have been.

the principles upon which Jesus Christ proceeds, in the salvation of other bad men similarly circumstanced with himself. 1 Tim. i. 13—16: see also 1 Tim. ii. 4, 6, iv. 10.*

In Note O, Mr. Townley thus expresses himself:—"As this is the last time I shall have occasion to mention Mr. Bush's work, I would beg again to suggest its perusal, as a *startling objection* to popular notions of the resurrection. The preface and introduction alone are worth the price of the volume." This is high praise: and, in as far as the abilities of the author are concerned, not higher than is deserved. Here, however, a most important question arises: Am I to understand my dear friend as expressing approbation of the doctrines laid down in the learned Professor's preface and introduction? If so, I am pained to say,—but a regard to truth compels me to do so,—that a more startling exhibition of great talents devoted to the propagation of religious scepticism, and the inculcation of fleshly views of divine truth, it has scarcely ever fallen to my lot to encounter, than in the portions of Mr. Bush's work thus recommended. (Except, perhaps, in his *Argument from Reason*, most admirable as a mere piece of human ratiocination, but a most barefaced assault upon the self-sufficiency, and alone sufficiency, of divine revelation.) Passing over the preface, and confining myself to the introduction, I remark, that progression in the knowledge of the scriptures, abstractly considered, is a grand and glorious truth; (strangely at variance, to be sure, with "a manifestation" of truth which "denies all progression and change," such as is that contended for by Mr. Townley;) but progression in the knowledge of the scriptures, like knowledge of them at all, is confined to the members of the election of God. For divine knowledge in flesh, as it

* I know that the present justification of the ungodly is through faith; Rom. iii. 20—30; but I know, also, that in the power of God to save a part is manifested that principle, so offensive to the pharisaical and fleshly mind of man, of the power of God to save the whole. Rom. xi. 32—36. How remarkable to see the apostle, in the second and fourth chapters of 1st Timothy, pushing out to the extent of universal salvation,—God is the Saviour of all men,—the same principle which, in the first chapter, he had shewn to be carried into effect now, in the case of believers—specially of those that believe. 1 Tim. iv. 10.

never has belonged to, so it never was intended to belong to the mere men of the world. See the commencements of most of Paul's Epistles: see particularly the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Therefore, while progression in divine knowledge is with me a fundamental principle, I contend for it as bestowed, not, as the Professor supposes, in consequence of our interrogating the scriptures, (after the fashion recommended, with reference to the physical sciences, in the *Novum Organum*,) but solely in consequence of their divine Author choosing to open up their meaning; not by means of active exertions put forth by those who make divine discoveries, but by means of God's making himself known to such as passive recipients of his truth. God was to be sought for by the Old Testament house of Israel; but the grand principle of his dealings with the members of his New Testament church is, that *he is found of them who seek him not*. Isaiah lxxv. 1, 2, Rom. x. 20, 21. The fact is, that God, in diametrical opposition to the Professor's theory, sees meet to bless the poor; (those "minds of the lowest order," at whose assent to the truth the worthy gentleman sneers, p. 50; see 1 Cor. i. 25—29;) while he sends the rich,—the self-conceited Pharisees, German Rationalists, Tractarian Theologians, Hebrew Scholars, and Professors of Hermeneutics imposing *their* laws of interpretation (save the mark!) upon divine revelation,—empty away. And while progression in divine knowledge is with me a fundamental principle, it is not such progression as consists in bending the infallible declarations of Jehovah to the theories of the sceptical, the scientific truly or falsely so called, and the deistical, (see the introduction, pp. 21—29,) but in the having opened up more and more, by Him who alone can do so, such views of the scriptures as by their beauty, harmony, truth, power, and glory, pour contempt more and more on all the boasted efforts and achievements of man; bending science, as merely human, to their divine discoveries, and not in any way succumbing to the real or pretended discoveries of science. The whole shewing, that the same God who once puzzled the scribes and the wise men of this world, by that *cross* which was to them

respectively *a stumbling block* and *foolishness*, 1 Cor. i. 17—25, iii. 18—20, is still, through his works of nature, which fleshly mind fancies it can thoroughly scan, puzzling all except those whom he condescends to instruct through his word. Yes; I rejoice in the progressive discoveries made to me, and to those besides who know the truth, by God himself, through the instrumentality of the scriptures; but not in the fancied discoveries made by scientific men, or by myself, at the expense of revelation.—Dear Mr. Townley, look at the snare laid for you by such men as those whom you admire, and in certain respects justly admire. Entangled themselves in fleshly theories, what can they, except such theories, throw around others? Blind themselves, what result can follow to those who blindly entrust themselves to their guidance, except that *both fall into the ditch*? If you cannot see the snare laid for you, may that God who alone can, preserve you from it.*

Allow me again for a moment to travel out of Note D. In one of those sneering attacks † upon the system of divine truth for which I am honoured to contend,‡—attacks which, I am sorry to think,

* “Surely,” says the Professor, “a revelation *not intelligible* would be no revelation at all,” page 18. This is fleshly mind speaking. *Intelligible!* Aye, according to him, *capable of being understood by all*.—Not so speak the scriptures themselves. Their “revelation” is not “*intelligible* ;” it is more—it is *understood*. And *understood* by all those by whom it was intended by its divine Author that it should be understood; but by none besides. All who are to understand it, have *ears* given to them to *hear*; and they do hear. By no others is it *intelligible*, that is, *capable of being understood*. Revelation *intelligible*, or within the scope of man’s natural abilities to understand it, is thus the idea and the language of fleshly mind; revelation *understood*, or revelation as what it really is, is the principle of revelation itself, and the experience of every one who is taught from above. Corrected, therefore, as it should be, Professor Bush’s language would run:—“Surely a revelation *not understood*, would be no revelation at all.” What, in this case, becomes of Mr. Townley’s statements, that that is a revelation of which, nevertheless, persons continue ignorant? that that is light which, nevertheless, does not make manifest? Eph. v. 13.

+ I at once assume your language, at the bottom of page 108 and top of page 109, as intended for me: indeed, it would argue sheer affectation on my part to dissemble my conviction that it is so.

‡ A system, by the way, from which you have borrowed many valuable, although unacknowledged hints. The want of acknowledging your obligations to it I bring not against you as any ground of accusation certainly. Supposing

but too much abound in and disfigure your clever and ingenious book,—you are pleased to represent me as “avowing belief in a future resurrection of dust”; and what you mean by “a resurrection of dust” is defined by yourself, at page 123, to be “a repetition of bodily life”: therefore about this matter there can be no mistake. Now, my dear friend, it is not my practice to charge any man with falsehood, when I can explain his language consistently with any other hypothesis. And if such be my practice in general, still less, where you are concerned, will my feelings towards you permit me to suppose for one instant that you could intentionally state what you knew to be untrue. Without any equivocation or reservation whatever, then, I acquit you of falsehood. But can I equally acquit you of carelessness? Can I satisfy my own mind that you have always taken the pains requisite to inform yourself accurately on the subjects of which you venture to treat? Let the facts of the case speak. You say that I “believe in a resurrection of dust.” Instead of so doing, the sentiment which you ascribe to me happens to stand diametrically opposed to mine. *I do not believe in a resurrection of dust!* I do not believe in any view which involves, through the death and resurrection of Christ, “a repetition of bodily life,” or a recurrence in any respect whatever to the state of things now existing! Nearly twenty years have elapsed since I could be charged with holding any such notions; and in the first part of my “Three Questions,” a work which I think you have read, the whole force of my reasonings is directed against them. To the same notions the whole scope of my “Divine Inversion” stands opposed. My view as to this subject is expressed in the language of the apostle: *as we have borne the image of the earthly, Adam, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly, Christ Jesus*; 1 Cor. xv. 49; and *he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies*, (not

your procedure in this respect intentional, it is a mere matter of taste on your part. But it is just as likely that your omission may be unintentional. Dr. Lee, Messrs. Roe, Wilkinson, Stark, and Bush, have such claims on you, that no wonder an obscurer individual should have been overlooked.—Dear friend, it is extremely gratifying to me to find that I have been able to render you any service.

body, dear friend, but bodies,) by his Spirit that dwelleth in us. Rom. viii. 11. That is, what are now bodies of dust, or of flesh and blood, I rejoice to think are raised up and live for ever as spiritual and glorious bodies, fashioned like to the spiritual and glorified body of the Son of God. In a word, I repudiate entirely, as unscriptural,—not on rational grounds, for with fleshly reason in divine things I have nothing to do,—the idea of the resurrection of a body of dust.—The view thus entertained by me, although you have perused pretty carefully several of my works, you appear hitherto to have overlooked; a circumstance which has evidently betrayed you into confounding my sentiments on the subject with those of the general run of professors of religion, who do hold the resurrection of dust, or of a flesh and blood body, and along with that, of necessity, “a repetition” more or less of the present bodily life and state of things. Your present mistake, however, you will not commit again. That sense of candour which I am satisfied you possess, will prevent you from doing so. You will understand me as avowing, that as Christ’s personal body rose, so do our personal bodies rise likewise, a result essential to our complete conformity to him, as well as to our individual existence; but you will understand me as avowing also, that what is now soulical or dust body is not raised again as such, but is raised as spiritual body, just as Christ’s was. You may not understand me. You may dislike my view. You may consider it as unscriptural. You may even feel disposed again to sneer at it. (Do, for your own sake, correct your sneering tendency, my dear friend.) But I think I know you too well to suppose that you will reiterate what I now tell you is incorrect, namely, that “I avow my belief in a future resurrection of dust.” A body of dust exists, and can only exist in time. It is only as clothed upon with spiritual body that our glorious Lord exists, and that any one can exist, throughout eternity. 1 Cor. xv. 42—49.

The grand reason of my friend’s dislike to my views, and what I perceive has drawn down upon me the expressions of asperity which occur in his work, is evidently my leading proposition, that

there is progression in the knowledge of divine truth now, in consequence of an increased and increasing opening up of the meaning of the scriptures, to his chosen ones, by their divine author. This is at variance with the Salemite theory. And also with Mr. Townley's dogma, of the present existence of "a manifestation full, complete, perfect, and conclusive, denying all progression and change." Opposition to my statement, at whatever cost, followed, therefore, as a matter of course. How pleasant in matters of controversy is it, after one has been subjected to the saying of smart, and even bitter things, which can break no bones, to find one's main proposition supported, nay, even contended for, by one's antagonist! Remarkably is this the case with my friend Mr. Townley. Notwithstanding "the completeness of" his "manifestation," he is still so much at a loss respecting "soul," and some other points, that he is desirous to have the full and complete "manifestation, which denies all progression and change," yet farther completed to his own mind. That is, he is waiting for farther "progression," and consequently "change in the manifestation," to himself! This is certainly very good. But it is not all. Progressive advancement in divine knowledge is actually by the denial of all such progression asserted as a principle! In his work itself he says,—"*In proportion as it,*" (our interpretation, or our system, or our knowledge of the Bible, the last I think,) "is seen and embraced, it corrects any tendency," &c. Page 5. Nay, not only so, but at page 7, we find him using the following strong language: "And then, moreover, with respect to the supposed non-ability of interpreting every scripture in favour, which appears to make against us, may we not be allowed to ask, if it is not quite as possible that the revelation of the infinite God should not yet be exhausted in a way of discovery of its glories, just as it is possible that the same should be the case in natural things"? A very proper question, my dear friend. And, by all who know the truth, falling to be answered, as it is your intention it should be, in the affirmative. Many, many are the years during which I have been contending for this glorious principle, that the creature hath not exhausted,

and cannot exhaust, the infinite manifestation of the Creator ; * and John Barclay, as I think you are aware, did the same thing before me. Many, many are the years during which I have been opposing this principle to the fixed humanly devised creeds of theologians. Happy am I to hail you now as a coadjutor in this one of my grand objects. — Still the question arises : — How can Mr. Townley hold this principle of progressive divine manifestation consistently with his avowal of the existence of “ a manifestation full, complete, perfect, and conclusive, denying all progression and change ” ? The true answer, I suspect, is this, — that Mr. Townley hitherto has neither understood me nor himself. Like him, I contend for revelation, in so far as the fact of committing it to writing is concerned, having been “ full, complete, perfect, and conclusive, denying all progression and change,” (nay, pronouncing a curse upon him who should add to it, see Rev. xxii. 18, language inconsistent with Dr. Tilloch’s scheme, †) previous to the period of Jerusalem’s destruction. (Query — In attacking me, would not perfect candour have dictated the making of this known ?) And it now appears by his own admissions that, like him, I contend for this same revelation, complete as to the writing of its words, being susceptible of gradual and progressive opening up to the children of God, (or by whatever other name he chooses to designate those who know its meaning,) by its divine Author. Wherein, then, friend Townley, *as to this point*, do we differ ? And if agreed, what becomes of your assertion, that God is now manifested fully, completely, and without the possibility of progression ? How can a manifestation which is progressive, as in your own case you admit it to be, nay, as you maintain it must be, be reconciled with “ a manifestation which ” somewhat inconsistently you maintain also “ denies all progression and change ” ? Excuse me for being thus particular, my dear sir. Think over the matter again. “ It is,” and “ it is not,” must here be had recourse to.

* See especially the Seventh Section of my “ Divine Inversion,” as well as my “ Why is Popery Progressing ? ” and my “ Preface to Barclay,” and other productions.

† In so far as it makes the Book of Revelation *the first* written.

"It is" *objectively* perfect; "it is not" *subjectively* so, but capable of progressive manifestation to the mind; is, to save circumlocution, and, when addressing those who understand the meaning of words, the way in which I should explain myself. And "it is not" progressive in some sense, but "it is" progressive in some other, is what my friend Mr. Townley, do what he will, unless he choose to repudiate his own words altogether, will be constrained to say. What then become of the high-swelling pretensions of the Salemite system?—You may try to evade the conclusion upon which I am forcing you, by saying that the Bible is "a clear revelation to the church, *no matter whether understood or not.*" *The second Advent a past event*, page 29. That is, a book "is a revelation" *which reveals nothing, and therefore is not a revelation.* And that that "is clear" *which is clear to nobody.* Again: "there they are, a revelation, *no matter as to the ignorance or knowledge of that poor earth-worm man.*" Page 90. In other words, that is "a revelation" *which is no revelation.* Do you expect me to refute this?—Or, "O that men would permit that the Bible should speak for itself!" *Ibid.* p. 26. By this am I to understand the power of man to comprehend the scriptures *independently of the teaching of their divine Author?* If so, then what becomes of a separate number? why do not all comprehend them? and why not avow yourself at once a Pelagian?*. If not, then this is not the fulness of the all in all state, but merely a step in the progression towards it.—Continue to admit, as you have done, the progressive opening up of the meaning of the scriptures,—in themselves complete and unsusceptible of addi-

* Strongly tempted am I to doubt your entertaining correct and scriptural ideas on the subject of an elect number alone being taught the truth. The whole strain of your work is at variance with my supposing you clear as to that point. Besides, there are passages now and then occurring which seem to indicate the identity of your views with those of our liberal religionists. Such as, for instance, "If, on the other hand, our diagram plan is in its great principles correct; *i. e.*, if the second advent of Christ has taken place, and if this doctrine should once seize upon the minds of the people, what then?" &c. *The Second Advent*, &c. p. 136. What is really divine never was calculated to seize on the minds of the people, and never will. Popular and fleshly dogmas, however, may.

EDITED BY THE AUTHOR.

WITHOUT FAITH WITHOUT GOD; or an APPEAL to GOD concerning his own EXISTENCE, &c. By the late JOHN BARCLAY, A. M., Pastor of the Berean Assembly, Edinburgh. With a Preface by the Rev. DAVID THOM, Minister of Bold-street Chapel, Liverpool.—1836. 2s. 6d.

WORKS PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR'S BROTHER, ROBERT THOM, ESQ., Her Britannic Majesty's Consul at Ningpo, China. Sold by Alexander Black, Foreign Bookseller, 8, Wellington-street North, Strand, London.

- 1.—WANG KEAOU LWAN PIH NEEN CHANG HAN, or the Lasting Resentment of Miss Keaou Lwan Wang. A Chinese Tale, founded on fact. Canton. 1839. 4s. *See Athenæum, August 1, 1840.*
 - 2.—ESOP'S FABLES, written in Chinese by the learned MUN MOOY SEEN-SANG, and compiled in their present form (with a free and a literal translation) by his pupil SLOTH. Macão.—1840 20s. (*Most favourably reported on to the Asiatic Society of Paris, by M. Bazin, ainé, Professor of Modern Chinese in the College de France. The report is inserted in No. 6 of the Journal Asiatique de Paris, for 1843.*)
 - 3.—A VOCABULARY OF THE CHINESE LANGUAGE. Hong Kong. 1843. 15s. (*A very high eulogium on this work, from the pen of M. Stanislas Julien, Member of the Institute, and Professor of Antient Chinese at Paris, appeared in the Journal des Debats, of the 24th June, 1844.*)
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* * The first part of the Author's work on *the Number of the Beast* will, D. V., soon make its appearance.

October 23rd., 1845.

